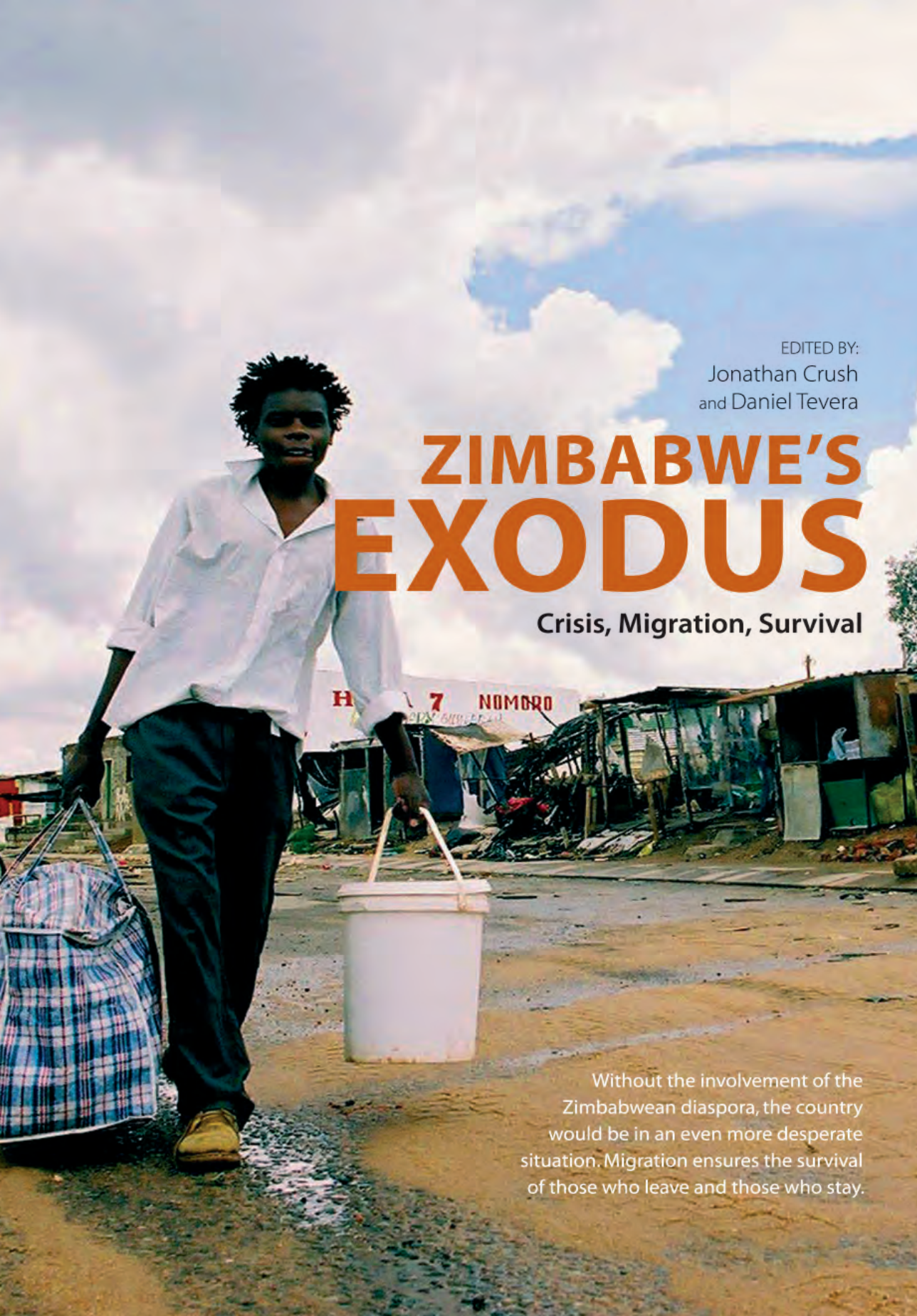


A young man with dark skin and short, curly hair is walking towards the camera. He is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and dark trousers. He is carrying a white plastic bucket in his right hand and a blue and white plaid bag in his left hand. The background shows a shanty town with makeshift buildings made of corrugated metal and wood. The sky is blue with white clouds.

EDITED BY:
Jonathan Crush
and Daniel Tevera

ZIMBABWE'S EXODUS

Crisis, Migration, Survival

Without the involvement of the Zimbabwean diaspora, the country would be in an even more desperate situation. Migration ensures the survival of those who leave and those who stay.

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Zimbabwe's Exodus

Crisis, Migration, Survival

Edited by
Jonathan Crush and Daniel Tevera

Southern African Migration Programme (SAMP)

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Foreword

Stories about migration are full of stereotypes and over-simplification. "Aliens" invade "our" country, bringing a foreign culture; people uproot their lives and move in response to shifts in relative wages; remittances promote economic development "back home." Often, there is a grain of truth behind these ideas. Migration does bring about a mingling of cultures; relative wage rates do matter; and remittances have helped finance new capital formation. But the grain of truth is most often enveloped, and over-powered, by myths, exaggerations and selective use of evidence, both inadvertent and – sometimes – deliberate. Both pro- and anti-migration orthodoxies suffer from these faults.

Zimbabwe's Exodus: Crisis, Migration, Survival is both an easy and a challenging book to read. It is easy because it is well-organised and well-written, drawing on leading experts and the latest research in the field. It is challenging precisely for the reasons that make it a successful and important book, because it dissects myths, analyses stereotypes, and reveals the complexities and ambiguities of the very difficult questions it addresses. Neither pro- nor anti-migration orthodoxies are spared.

I appreciate this book for three other reasons as well. First, it situates the recent migration out of Zimbabwe in its proper historical context. In most of the western media, the decline of Zimbabwe dates from and is attributed to the land reforms of 2000-2003. This book clearly situates the migration question in a generalised socio-economic decline that was underway for a decade before that. Zimbabwe's long history as a site of migration, to and from other countries and within the country, is appropriately highlighted, as is the question of borders, both international and, in colonial times, internal borders within the then Rhodesia.

Secondly, the authors deal with issues of social differentiation – gender, social class and ethnicity – head-on. This involves tackling in a forthright manner some ugly questions of sexual violence, racism, poor governance, corruption and discrimination within Zimbabwe, in its neighbouring states and further abroad.

Thirdly, the book looks at migration from a variety of perspectives and academic disciplines. Migration is examined at its micro-, macro- and sectoral levels, using large-scale surveys and in-depth interviews, media reports and official statistics, quantitative and qualitative methods. The result is a rich and multi-faceted set of studies that is worth spending time with.

Naturally, this book will be of great interest to Zimbabweans at home and abroad, and to all others interested in the political economy of modern Zimbabwe. But this book will also be of great interest to specialists and students in migration and development studies more generally, given the quality and the incisiveness of the contributions that the authors and editors bring to the field.

Canada's International Development Research Centre has supported several research projects on migration in recent years, including this one. I am delighted to see this fine collection in print.

Lauchlan T. Munro

Vice President

International Development Research Centre

Ottawa, Canada

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Jonathan Crush

Daniel Tevera

Acronyms

BSAC	British South Africa Com-pany
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CoRMSA	Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CSO	Central Statistical Office
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
EU	European Union
GDP	gross domestic product
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organiza-tion for Migration
LPI	Lived Poverty Index
MARS	Migration and Remittances Survey

MBA	Master of Business Administration
MLD	most likely destination
MoHCW	Ministry of Health and Child Welfare
MV	Migrant Voices Project
NDMC	National Disaster Management Centre
NHS	National Health Service
NRC	Native Recruiting Corporation
NGO	non-governmental organization
NMC	Nursing and Midwifery Council
OAU	Organization for African Unity
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PRM	US State Department' Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration
PSBS	Potential Skills Base Survey
RENAMO	Mozambican Resistance Movement
RNLB	Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau
RNLSC	Rhodesia Native Labour Supply Commission
RNs	Registered Nurses
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAHRC	South African Human Rights Commission
SAMP	Southern African Migration Programme
SAP	structural adjustment programme
SAPA	South African Press Association
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SARCS	South African Red Cross Society
SSHRC	Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

UDI	(Rhodesian) unilateral declaration of independence
UK	United Kingdom
UK-DFID	UK Department for International Development
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VAT	Value Added Tax
WHO	World Health Organization
WNLA	Witwatersrand Native Labour Association
ZIMRA	Zimbabwe Revenue Authority
ZWD	Zimbabwean dollar

Chapter One

Exiting Zimbabwe

Jonathan Crush and Daniel Tevera

When modern states go into terminal decline or fail altogether, the predictable response of ordinary people is to get out, as soon as they can, to wherever they can go.¹ Zimbabwe has now joined the list of 'crisis-driven' migrations which includes such recent African crises as Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Somalia and Sierra Leone.² Twenty years ago, despite growing political authoritarianism, few would have predicted this fate for Zimbabwe. Following a bitter and protracted independence war, Zimbabwe made major economic and social gains in the 1980s. After 1990, however, the accelerating social, political and economic unravelling of the country led to a rush for the exits. An economy in free-fall, soaring inflation and unemployment, the collapse of public services, political oppression and deepening poverty proved to be powerful, virtually irresistible, push factors for many Zimbabweans.³ The proximity of Zimbabwe to countries such as Botswana and South Africa, and the demand for Zimbabwean professionals abroad, provided people with somewhere to go.⁴ The numbers exiting Zimbabwe increased in the 1990s and have risen sharply since 2000.⁵

Mass out-migration would seem to be a perfectly predictable consequence of Zimbabwe's economic and social collapse. As one commentator recently observed, the exodus of hundreds of thousands of people is the result of "the Zimbabwe government's political actions and the country's decline [which] have led to their economic destitution and desperation, and have ultimately forced them to leave the country to survive the political and economic crisis."⁶ However, although large numbers have left, the majority remain.

Given the ruinous state of the country's economy, it remains a puzzle as to who, why, and indeed how, anyone could stay. The transformation of Zimbabwe from breadbasket to basket-case has been a protracted process lasting well over two decades.⁷ Migration (both internal and international) has varied considerably in volume, direction and character over that period. While out-migration is a common response to socioeconomic disintegration, it can also accelerate that process, leading, in turn, to further migration.

Emigration has led to crippling skills losses in the public and private sectors in Zimbabwe over the last two decades. No country could experience this kind of professional brain drain without it seriously affecting the quality of education and healthcare, the productivity of the private sector or the efficiency of the public. This is something of a vicious cycle, for as the rot sets in, workloads increase and employment conditions deteriorate so more skilled people, in turn, decide to leave. Without a compensating inflow of skilled immigrants, the cycle is difficult to break. Immigration to Zimbabwe came to a virtual standstill in the 1990s. Emigration without immigration has clearly facilitated the economic and social collapse of Zimbabwe. Yet emigration also shapes the character and speed of decline and can sometimes, paradoxically, even slow its pace. It does this by providing people who remain behind with the remittances and other resources to survive increasingly intolerable personal circumstances.

The essays in this volume focus on the connections between economic and social decline and migration since 1990 in Zimbabwe. These connections are explored from different angles and use a number of different methodologies ranging from large-scale national surveys to individual life histories. The volume also seeks to give contemporary migration movements historical depth and to place them in their regional and international context. Historically, Zimbabwe has simultaneously been a country of in-migration and out-migration. In the last two decades of decline, it has become a place almost exclusively of out-migration. In terms of theoretical context, the volume seeks to situate the Zimbabwean case within the current high-profile international debate on the relationship between migration and development.⁸ As scholars of migration from "failing states" have pointed out, this debate is especially relevant in the case of countries, like Zimbabwe, that are undergoing accelerating poverty, economic collapse, de-development and mass out-migration.⁹

The introduction to this volume is divided into three sections. The first section provides a socio-demographic profile of the Zimbabwean migrant population. Then we exam-

ine some of the major themes of the contemporary international migration-development debate and relate them to the situation in Zimbabwe. Finally, the chapter summarises how the individual chapters relate to one another and to the themes of the book as a whole.

ZIMBABWE'S DIASPORA: A PROFILE

Estimates of the number of Zimbabweans who have left the country in recent years vary widely – from the barely plausible to the totally outlandish. Excoriating the South African government for its foreign policy stance on Zimbabwe, veteran journalist Allister Sparks recently argued that there were three million Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa and that without a tougher line against Robert Mugabe, South Africa “could well see another two million pour in here.”¹⁰ Whatever the truth of his numerical claims (and most knowledgeable commentators would think them highly exaggerated), this kind of alarmism omits a crucial dimension of the migration equation.¹¹ What Sparks overlooks is that every Zimbabwean working in South Africa supports an average of five people at home. As long as each migrant is able to support dependants in Zimbabwe, they will tend to stay where they are. In other words, but for migration there would be a great deal more migration than there has been. This is only one of the many paradoxes of Zimbabwe's recent migration history.

The South African media claims that there are three million Zimbabweans in South Africa. The earliest use of this figure dates back to 2003; the most recent, early 2009. What are we to make of the inference that the number of Zimbabweans in the country has not increased in six years? After all, this is the same media that for the last six years has plied its readership with stories of Zimbabweans “pouring” and “flooding” across the Limpopo. Does this mean that there are now well over three million or that the 2003 figure was incorrect? And if it was correct, then what is the actual number now? To resolve this contradiction, it is helpful to know where the three million figure first came from.

The original source seems to have been former South African President Thabo Mbeki, who reportedly told Commonwealth Secretary General Don McKinnon in October 2003 that “he has three million Zimbabweans in South Africa, Chissano (Mozambique) has 400,000 while Botswana hosts up to 200,000 of them.”¹² The Department of Home Affairs, cited in the same article, contradicted Mbeki by stating that there was no way

of knowing how many Zimbabweans were in the country because they enter illegally: "These people do not use the designated ports of entry but enter the country clandestinely by jumping the borders, swimming through the river etc."¹³ Here, in one article, are the two elements that have characterized all reporting on Zimbabwean migration to South Africa. Migration flows are in the "millions" and migrants from Zimbabwe ("these people") are "illegal." The South African media and officialdom have a history of making up numbers about migration to the country.¹⁴ These numbers, often highly exaggerated for alarmist effect, acquire a life of their own once they enter the public realm. Tracking down their source usually reveals that they have no sound statistical basis.

The Zimbabwean government has not kept any reliable statistics of departures. South Africa, the main receiving country, can tell how many Zimbabweans enter the country legally every month and the stated purpose of entry but publishes no corresponding record of departures. In addition, there are no reliable estimates at all of how many migrants enter South Africa clandestinely. Further complicating matters is the migration behaviour of many Zimbabwean migrants within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region who return home extremely frequently for periods of time.

The majority of migrants from Zimbabwe head either for South Africa or the United Kingdom. The volume of legal cross-border traffic between Zimbabwe and South Africa has gone through several phases since Zimbabwean independence (Figure 1.1). For most of the 1980s, about 200,000 people crossed from Zimbabwe into South Africa each year. In the early 1990s, with the collapse of apartheid and growing economic hardship in Zimbabwe, the numbers increased dramatically, peaking at 750,000 in 1994. Thereafter, the numbers actually fell again, reflecting the tightening of restrictions on Zimbabwean movement by the post-apartheid South African government. These restrictions gradually eased after the passage of the 2002 Immigration Act. In 2000, around 500,000 people crossed legally from Zimbabwe into South Africa.¹⁵ By 2008, this figure had more than doubled to 1.25 million. In the case of the United Kingdom, official immigration statistics show a recent decline in the entry of Zimbabweans from 56,600 in 2002 to 39,250 in 2007. Most of the drop is in the "visitors" category, a result of increased restrictions on entry to the UK.

In 2001, according to the South African Census and the United Nations (UN) "migrant stock" database, a total of 131,887 Zimbabwean-born people were in South Africa and

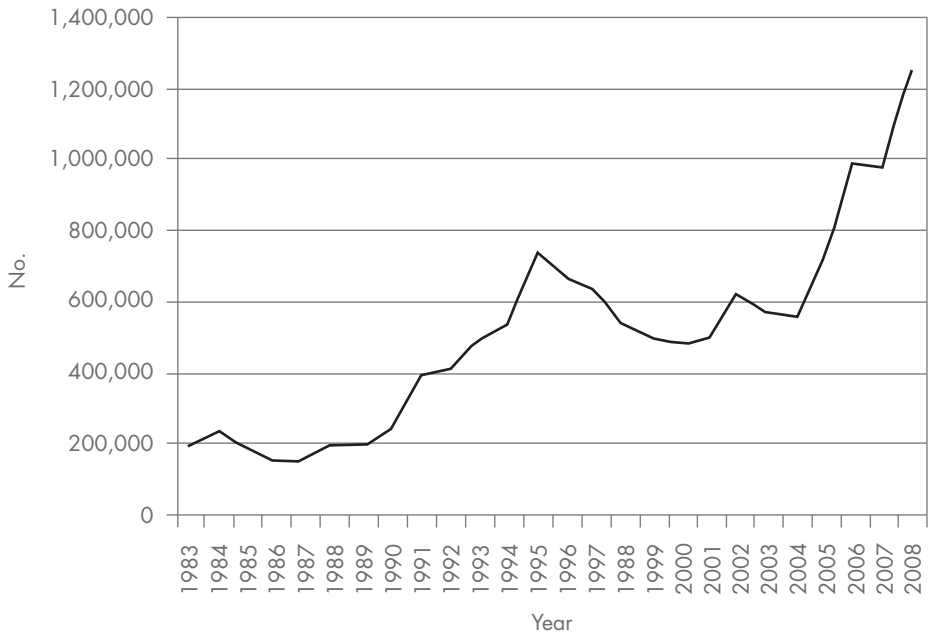


Figure 1.1: Recorded Cross-Border Movement from Zimbabwe to South Africa, 1983-2008

Source: South African Department of Trade and Industry

49,890 were in the United Kingdom. The South African figure included 66,033 black and 64,261 white Zimbabweans. The number of black Zimbabweans in South Africa at any one time has undoubtedly increased since 2001 but by how much is uncertain. The World Bank has estimated that in 2005 there were 510,084 Zimbabweans in South Africa (although the basis for this estimation is unclear). In this volume, Makina uses a different methodology to arrive at a figure of 1,022,965 in 2007. Whatever the precise numbers, it is clear that there has been a substantial increase in migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa since 2000 and a drop in migration to the United Kingdom.

Within SADC, 55 percent of the Zimbabwean migrant stock in 2001 was in South Africa, followed by Mozambique (17 percent), Zambia (16 percent) and Malawi (16 percent) (Table 1.1). A Southern African Migration Programme (SAMP) sample survey (conducted in 2005) found that 58 percent of Zimbabwean migrants were within the SADC region. The two data sources suggest some interesting changes in migration patterns. For example, the proportion of Zimbabweans outside SADC seems to have increased from 33 percent to 41 percent. Since migration to the UK became more difficult, this trend – if

verifiable – might suggest a greater global dispersal of Zimbabwean migrants. Within SADC, the proportion of SADC migrants in South Africa remained virtually constant (at around 55 percent) but there appears to have been a very significant increase in movement to Botswana (from 1.5 percent to 28 percent) and corresponding fall in migration to Mozambique (17 percent to 9 percent), Zambia (16 percent to 4 percent) and Malawi (7 percent to 1.5 percent).

Table 1.1: Location of Zimbabwean Migrants Within SADC

Country	2001 UN Migrant Stock		2005 SAMP Survey	
	% of Global	% in SADC	% of Global	% in SADC
South Africa	36.9	54.8	32.3	55.8
Mozambique	11.2	16.7	5.1	8.8
Zambia	10.6	15.7	2.1	3.6
Malawi	4.5	6.7	0.9	1.5
Botswana	1.0	1.5	16.1	27.8
Angola	1.0	1.4	1.0	1.5
DRC	1.0	1.4	<0.1	<0.1
Tanzania	1.0	1.4	0.2	0.4
Seychelles	0.1	0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Lesotho	0.1	0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Swaziland	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Namibia	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Madagascar	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Mauritius	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Total	66.5	100.0	58.9	100.0

Source: UN, SAMP

The UN Migrant Stock database suggests that the Zimbabwean-born diaspora was already becoming global in its distribution in 2001. Nearly 20 percent of the global migrant stock was located in Western Europe, 5 percent in North America, 4 percent in Australasia and 3 percent in the rest of Africa (Table 1.2). Of the 222 jurisdictions (countries and other territories) reported in the database, 192 (or 86 percent) have at least one Zimbabwean-

born person. However, certain countries have clearly been major destinations. They include the United Kingdom (14 percent of the global stock), the United States (3.5 percent), Australia (3.3 percent), Germany (2.8 percent) and Canada (1.2 percent).

Table 1.2: Zimbabwean Migrant Stock by Region

Region	No.	% Global Stock
Southern Africa	240,494	66.5
East & Central Africa	1,087	0.3
West Africa	9,012	2.5
North Africa & The Horn	715	0.2
Western Europe	66,910	18.4
Eastern Europe	4,068	1.1
Australasia & Pacific	14,664	4.1
North America	16,598	4.6
Latin America	397	0.1
Caribbean	193	0.1
Middle East	2,872	0.8
Asia	4,733	1.3
Total	361,743	100.0

Source: UN

At the time of the 2001 South African Census, 52 percent of recorded Zimbabweans were in the province of Gauteng, with smaller numbers in KwaZulu-Natal (13 percent), Limpopo (12 percent) and the Western Cape (9 percent) (Table 1.3). Most of the post-2000 doubling of movement from Zimbabwe to South Africa came from migrants who declared their purpose of entry as “holiday,” an all-purpose category that conceals a multitude of motives for entry and provides no insights at all into what people actually do in South Africa (Table 1.4). Very few, we can be sure, were “on holiday.” They were joining or visiting relatives, getting medical help unavailable at home, buying and selling goods and, of course, making money to send or take home. They are legally in the country but they are certainly not on holiday. The number of legitimate entrants on “business” remained virtually stable over the period. The numbers of legal entrants for work and study

did increase but remained a small proportion of the total. The numbers with legal work permits increased from 3,500 in 2001 to 21,000 in 2008, suggesting that it has become easier to legally employ Zimbabweans in South Africa since the 2002 Immigration Act was passed. However, a greater number are almost certainly working without permits.

Table 1.3: Location of Zimbabweans in South Africa, 2001

	Male	Female	Total	%
Eastern Cape	2,570	2,691	5,261	4.0
Free State	930	689	1,619	1.2
Gauteng	40,822	27,788	68,610	52.0
Kwazulu-Natal	7,986	8,812	16,798	12.7
Limpopo	9,865	6,317	16,182	12.3
Mpumalanga	2,941	2,042	4,983	3.8
Northern Cape	200	186	386	0.3
North West	4,216	1,895	6,111	4.6
Western Cape	5,428	6,508	11,936	9.1
Total	74,958	59,628	131,886	100.0

Source: *Statistics South Africa*

Table 1.4: Stated Purpose of Entry from Zimbabwe to South Africa, 2002-8

Year	Holiday	Business	Work	Study	Other*	Total
2002	566,838	28,910	3,557	6,644	6,594	612,543
2003	526,479	26,620	4,749	7,227	3,551	568,626
2004	507,016	31,995	6,980	8,920	3,222	558,093
2005	679,562	25,286	7,079	9,909	4,183	727,726
2006	937,766	24,853	9,043	12,646	5,306	989,614
2007	916,093	28,876	13,074	13,389	5,669	977,101
2008	1,178,733	27,345	21,050	13,387	7,528	1,248,043

* Includes in transit and border passes

Source: *Statistics South Africa*

In the United Kingdom, a growing proportion of entrants were returnees coming back after a visit home (rising from around 20 percent of entrants in 2002 to over 50 percent in 2007) (Table 1.5). In all other categories – ordinary visitors, business visitors, students, work permit holders, dependants of permit holders, reunified spouses or fiancés and refugees – the numbers have consistently declined since 2000. This seems counterintuitive since the pressures for migration from Zimbabwe to the UK have only increased. Rather, it reflects tighter British border and visa controls by a government trying to keep Zimbabweans out, and able, much more effectively than South Africa, to actually do so. The tightening of restrictions on migration to the UK has, of course, had the perverse effect of increasing the migration pressure on neighbouring South Africa and Botswana.

Table 1.5: Zimbabwean Entrants to United Kingdom, 2002-7

	Returnees	Visitors	Business	Students	Work Permits	Dependents/ Family	Refugees	Other	Total
2002	15,500	27,500	2,790	1,780	730	845	1,710	9,225	56,600
2003	19,100	14,900	1,850	790	565	1,550	70	4,890	43,665
2004	24,300	16,000	1,730	830	525	1,340	160	6,600	51,320
2005	21,000	14,500	1,710	795	470	1,270	135	5,455	45,335
2006	20,700	12,700	1,620	480	350	1,085	60	5,025	41,910
2007	20,800	11,600	1,500	375	290	765	35	3,915	39,250

Source: UK Control of Immigration Statistics, 2002-7

Traditionally, in Southern Africa, outbound migration streams were dominated by young, single, unskilled males. The contemporary migration flow from Zimbabwe is extremely “mixed” compared with pre-1990 out-migration and with that from other countries in the Southern African region. There are almost as many women migrants as men; there are migrants of all ages from young children to the old and infirm; those fleeing hunger and poverty join those fleeing persecution and harassment; they are from all rungs of the occupational and socioeconomic ladder; they are highly-read and illiterate, professionals and paupers, doctors and ditch-diggers.

The most recent national profile of the Zimbabwean migrant worker population was obtained in a representative household survey undertaken by SAMP in 2005. The survey confirmed the increase in migration from Zimbabwe after 2000 (Table 1.6). Nearly three-quarters of the sample (72 percent) had worked outside the country for 5 years or less and only 10 percent had been working as migrants for over 10 years. There was no major difference between men and women, suggesting that for the vast majority of both sexes out-migration is a recent experience.

Table 1.6: Length of Migratory Experience

Years	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
1 – 5	71.1	72.5	71.6
6 – 10	20.9	20.5	20.8
11 – 15	4.6	4.3	4.5
26 – 20	1.4	1.9	1.6
19 – 25	1.2	0.3	0.8
26 – 30	0.2	0.0	0.1
>30	0.4	0.0	0.2
Don't know	0.2	0.5	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

N = 805

Source: SAMP

The 2001 South African Census found that 57 percent of Zimbabweans in South Africa were male and 43 percent female. In 2005, SAMP found a very similar ratio still pertained (56 percent and 44 percent). Many more migrants were married than unmarried (58 percent versus 31 percent) with another 10 percent widowed, separated or divorced (Table 1.7). Around a third of migrants were sons and daughters in the household, 28 percent were heads of households and another 13 percent were spouses or partners of household heads. All of this suggests a broadening and deepening of participation in migration from Zimbabwe.

Table 1.7: Demographic Profile of Migrants

		No	%
Relationship	Head	226	28.3
	Spouse/Partner	101	12.6
	Son/Daughter	286	35.8
	Father/Mother	7	0.9
	Brother/Sister	115	14.4
	Grandchild	2	0.3
	Son/Daughter-in-law	8	1.0
	Nephew/ Niece	18	2.3
	Other relative	30	3.8
	Non-relative	7	0.9
	Total	800	100.0
Age	15 to 24	124	15.4
	25 to 39	454	56.4
	40 to 59	185	23.0
	60 and over	7	0.9
	Don't know	35	4.3
	Total	805	100.0
Marital Status	Unmarried	247	30.7
	Married	469	58.3
	Cohabiting	7	0.9
	Divorced/Separated Abandoned	45	5.6
	Widowed	37	4.6
	Total	805	100.0
Education	None	6	0.8
	Primary/Secondary	383	47.9
	Diploma	225	28.1
	Degree/Postgraduate	182	22.8
	Don't know	4	0.5
	Total	800	100.0

Source: SAMP Migration Database

The majority of migrants were relatively young (72 percent are under the age of 40) and well-educated. Less than 1 percent had no schooling and over 50 percent had a post-secondary diploma, undergraduate degree or post-graduate degree. Migrants were employed in a wide variety of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled jobs outside Zimbabwe. In other words, this is a generalized out-movement of people, not confined to one or two professions or sectors. Twenty percent of migrants were in the informal sector as traders, vendors, hawkers or producers. Also significant were skilled professionals (15 percent), health workers (12 percent), services (9 percent), teachers (7 percent), manual workers (6 percent) and office workers (5 percent) (Table 1.8).

Table 1.8: Occupational Profile of Zimbabweans

Occupation	No.	No. of Migrants	% of Migrants	Migrants as % of Total
Scholar/Student	865	10	1.3	1.1
Trader/Informal sector	302	154	20.3	51.0
Professional worker	247	120	15.8	48.6
Teacher	199	56	7.4	28.1
Service worker	153	72	9.5	47.1
Health worker	133	92	12.1	69.2
Office worker	116	40	5.3	34.5
Business (self-employed)	112	33	4.4	29.5
Manual	100	50	6.6	50.0
Domestic worker	74	18	2.4	24.3
Managerial office worker	67	29	3.8	43.3
Mineworker	58	24	3.2	41.4
Farmer	44	5	0.7	11.4
Police/Military/Security	35	5	0.7	14.3
Agricultural worker	28	11	1.5	39.3
Employer/Manager	16	10	1.3	62.5
Foreman	15	6	0.8	40.0
Other	61	23	2.9	37.7
Total	2,625	758	100.0	37.3

Source: SAMP Migration Database

A comparison of total with out-of-country employment by sector shows that 70 percent of Zimbabwe's health workers were migrants. Over 40 percent of professional workers, service workers, managerial office workers and mineworkers were also migrants. Between 30 and 40 percent of office workers and agricultural workers were outside the country. For teachers, the proportion was 28 percent and for domestic workers 25 percent. Only in the security and military sector and in farming were there significantly more people employed inside the country than out of it.

Table 1.9: Frequency of Return

		No.	%
Return Frequency	Twice or more per month	138	16.5
	Once a month	121	14.5
	> Twice in 3 months	65	7.8
	Once in three months	90	10.8
	Once every 6 months	57	6.8
	Once a year	159	19.0
	At end of the contract	33	3.9
	Other	173	20.7
	Total	836	100.0
Time Away	< One month	152	18.3
	1-6 months	154	18.6
	6-12 months	245	29.6
	One year at a time	59	7.1
	> One year	110	13.3
	Other	109	13.1
	Total	829	100.0

Source: SAMP Migration Database

The survey also confirmed that most migrants maintain close connections with Zimbabwe. Nearly half visit their families at least once every three months. However, almost 20 percent of the migrants (mostly living overseas) are only able to return home once

a year (Table 1.9). Absences from home are highly variable: 18 percent are away for less than a month at a time, 19 percent for between one and six months and 30 percent for between six months and a year. Twenty percent are away for a year or longer. As several of the essays in this collection show, these patterns facilitate the flow of remittances as well as influence the channels preferred by migrants for sending money home.

MIGRATION AND ZIMBABWEAN DE-DEVELOPMENT

The developmental role of migrant remittances is central to the current international focus on the relationship between migration, poverty and development.¹⁶ International bodies such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the UN, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) remain incorrigibly optimistic about the development potential of migrant remittances.¹⁷ Researchers have generally been more sceptical, highlighting the degree to which remittances are used for basic needs rather than for savings and investment in productive activity.¹⁸ Various reasons have been advanced for why remittance flows often fail to improve the development prospects of a country of origin: "First, there is the difficulty in many countries of converting remittances into sustainable productive capacity; second, remittance income is rarely used for productive purposes but for direct consumption. Very little is directed to income-earning, job-creating investment. Finally, remittances increase inequality, encourage import consumption and create dependency."¹⁹ In short, it is "a distant hope that remittances could help families, communities and countries remain permanently out of poverty."²⁰ If this is true of developing countries in general, it is a statement of the obvious in fragile and failing states. There remittances can play a crucial role in taking the edge off people's suffering and in providing them a basic livelihood in the midst of economic and social chaos, but little else.²¹

If remittances were once a potential lever for sustainable livelihoods in Zimbabwe, that threshold has long ago been crossed. The vast majority of Zimbabwean households with a migrant member in the region or abroad regularly receive remittances.²² Indeed, remittances from the Zimbabwean diaspora have reached such volumes that they kept the economy grinding along for a number of years. Cognizant of this fact, the Mugabe government tried various ruses to ensure that the state got its hands on a greater

proportion of the remittance inflow.²³ However, as in many parts of the developing world, remitters tend to avoid formal channels and use informal means in the main. Without the constant infusion of remittances from abroad, the economic and social collapse of Zimbabwe would have been much faster and even more catastrophic.

Levels of poverty and chronic shortages of the basic necessities of life are such that remittance getting is a survival, not a development, strategy in contemporary Zimbabwe.²⁴ The proportion of migrant remittances spent on food is amongst the highest in the world. The Zimbabwean population, as has often been mentioned, is unable to feed itself, necessitating large-scale food imports.²⁵ Very few households can afford to invest funds in activities that would, for example, enable them to increase their own food production. What is sometimes forgotten is that without remittances of food and cash to purchase food, the hunger and malnutrition situation in Zimbabwe would be even more dire than it has become.

Globally, skilled emigration from almost all developing countries increased substantially in the 1990s. For many, the share of skilled nationals residing in developed countries became “staggeringly high.”²⁶ Much skilled migration is South-North in character; an estimated 90 percent of skilled migrants from developing countries live in the member states of the OECD.²⁷ The estimated percentage of emigrants with tertiary education is largest for Africa at 75 percent, followed by Latin America at 48 percent, and Asia and the Pacific at 20 percent.²⁸ Others estimate that one in ten tertiary-educated adults born in the developing world resided in America, Australia or Western Europe in 2001; this figure rises to between 30 and 50 percent for individuals trained in science and technology.²⁹

Critics argue that the “brain drain” has a major negative impact on the development prospects of a country: “While high skilled migration in sectors such as IT seems to have played an integral role in helping spur economic development in a few source countries, high-skilled migration in other sectors – health and medicine, in particular – [has] done considerable damage to source countries.”³⁰ Most effects discussed in the general literature are negative. They include output and productivity declines; larger skill premiums that increase inequality; fiscal losses through lost tax revenue; diminished scale economies; loss of role models and spillover knowledge from most-skilled to lesser-skilled individuals; loss of entrepreneurs; and changed comparative advantage. Human capital is lost with implications for gross domestic product (GDP), entrepreneurialism,

training the next generation, flows of foreign direct investment and a country's capacity to build critical domestic institutions.³¹

The established wisdom on the "brain drain" has been challenged by adherents of the self-styled "new economics of the brain drain" approach.³² This postulates that "brain drain" is a temporary stage and that, indeed, it may even be the "harbinger of powerful gains."³³ One argument is that the prospect of migration produces over-education, a "brain strain" and "educated unemployment." Another is that the feedback effects of migration (including remittances, investment and knowledge transfer) as well as return migration should be considered. The "new economics" approach uses selective case studies to make its point, proving only that generalizations across the South are inadvisable. Tanner, however, asserts that benefits accrue more to large, relatively better-off developing countries that have deliberate labour-export policies, and to elites in these countries:

The measures presented as mitigating or even eliminating the effects of brain drain do not achieve an ethically sustainable objective – to directly or indirectly relieve general poverty and inefficient use of human resources, and to promote more equitable long-term development throughout the country of origin's society as a whole.³⁴

The Southern African region has been in the grip of a serious "brain drain" for two decades.³⁵ Not only have skills losses been very serious but there is little prospect of the drain being reduced as long as employment opportunities persist in destination countries. With the notable exception of Botswana, and more recently South Africa, none have pro-active immigration policies to counteract the ensuing skills crisis. Of all the countries in Southern Africa, Zimbabwe has been worst-affected by the "brain drain."³⁶ In the 1980s, the black Zimbabwean population benefitted from a post-independence educational policy that emphasized universal access and advanced skills acquisition. As the 1990s progressed, and global competition for developing country skills intensified, advanced qualifications became a passport out of the country. There was growing "educated unemployment" but many of those who left had jobs in Zimbabwe. The extent of the "brain drain" from the private and public sector has been of such magnitude and impact that it has had severely negative, even ruinous, impacts.³⁷ The "emigration potential" of those who remain is extremely high and it is certain that without significant return migration there is little hope of sustained economic recovery in Zimbabwe.³⁸ The

phrase “feminization of migration” has been coined to describe increases in the volume of international female migration and its growing importance relative to male migration.³⁹ While there has certainly been a global increase in female migration in recent decades, the UN has pointed out that in proportional terms, the global female stock of migrants was already 47 percent in 1960 and increased to 49 percent by 2000.⁴⁰ In recent writing “feminization” has therefore come to refer more to changing forms of female migration, including a greater degree of independent migration and migration for employment purposes.⁴¹ The evidence suggests that in Africa as a whole female migration has increased in numbers and relative importance in recent decades (from 41 percent in 1960 to 47 percent in 2000). In Southern Africa, however, male migration still predominates.⁴² A 2005 SAMP survey of migrant-sending households in five SADC countries, found that 84.5 percent of migrants were male and only 15.5 percent were female. Migration from Zimbabwe was highly “feminized” in comparison with the other three countries (with 44 percent of migrants being female) (Table 1.10).

Table 1.10: Sex of International Migrants, 2005

Country	Male (%)	Female (%)
Lesotho	83.6	16.4
Mozambique	93.6	6.2
Swaziland	92.4	7.6
Zimbabwe	56.4	43.6
Total	84.5	15.5

Source: *SAMP Migration Database*

Diminishing alternatives have forced Zimbabwean women from across the full range of age, skills and education levels to engage in various forms of cross-border economic activity, from informal trade to long-term formal employment. Without reliable, regular data on levels of female migration at earlier dates, it is difficult to accurately assess the extent to which female migration has increased in either absolute or relative terms. An earlier SAMP survey in 1997 found that the ratio of male to female migration from Zimbabwe was very similar to that in 2005.⁴³ There is very little gender difference in the lengths of time that people have been migrating. In other words, in Zimbabwe

(unlike other countries) the majority of male and female migrants are recent migrants. This suggests that feminization of migration relates more to growing numbers and new roles rather than any sudden post-2000 surge in the importance of female versus male migration.

Another important aspect of the global migration and development debate concerns the role of diasporas in the development of countries of origin.⁴⁴ To some extent, the focus on diasporas is a conscious antidote to the critics of "the brain drain" for, if nothing else, the idea that migrants do not leave for good clearly softens the claims of those who feel that skills loss represents an unmitigated disaster. In the global discourse on migration and development, diasporas are rapidly replacing remittances as the "new development mantra." One classification helpfully identifies three forms of diaspora engagement: first, development in the diaspora (the economic and social advancement of immigrants in the host country); secondly, development through the diaspora (the use by diasporic communities of their global connections to facilitate economic and social development); and thirdly, development by the diaspora (how diasporic flows and connections to home countries facilitate development in those localities).⁴⁵ Diaspora actors include individuals, hometown associations, ethnic associations, alumni associations, religious associations, professional associations, development NGOs, investment/business groups, political groups, national development groups, welfare/refugee groups and virtual organizations.

There has been a growing recognition in destination countries that diaspora individuals, groups and organizations are engaged independently in activities that have developmental aims and outcomes and that these should be encouraged and supported. Diasporas are themselves increasingly well-organised and lobbying for assistance in these activities. By tapping the diaspora, developing countries aim to encourage remittance flows, investment and technical and scientific knowledge transfer. The oft-cited cases of India and China are particularly important in demonstrating how diasporas can contribute to investment and economic growth in countries of origin.⁴⁶ The evidence for Africa is less compelling although the African Union has been particularly active in encouraging African states to engage with their emigrant diasporas.⁴⁷ In some cases, states have met a very positive response from abroad.⁴⁸ Diaspora organizations and networks with an express development brief have begun to spring up in destination countries and are actively seeking ways in which to bring their

knowledge, capital and connections to bear on the challenges that face many African countries.

The Zimbabwean diaspora is widely-dispersed, very young and extremely insecure.⁴⁹ This is not a group who have emigrated permanently to another country over an extended period of time, put down roots and achieved the kind of social and economic success that enables systematic engagement of the kind usually associated with diasporas in development. Zimbabwean diaspora organizations are increasingly common in countries such as South Africa and the United Kingdom. However, these tend to be of two kinds: politically-focused organizations dedicated to raising consciousness about Zimbabwe or protesting treatment in their countries of destination, and humanitarian groupings and networks dedicated to helping new migrants survive, settle and integrate.⁵⁰ While the Zimbabwean diaspora remains intensely interested in their home country and follows events there with great assiduity, many in the diaspora are profoundly hostile to the political regime in power. Supporting struggling families at home is one thing. Engagement in any activity that might be deemed supportive of – or co-optable by – Mugabe is not.

Zimbabwean migrants within Southern Africa, but also those living outside the region, return home relatively frequently. When away they also maintain very close contact with relatives and kin still in the country. The intensity of contact and exchange is such that the terms “transnational migration” and “transnationalism” have been increasingly applied to Zimbabwean migration.⁵¹ Transnational migration has been defined as “a pattern of migration in which persons, although they move across international borders, settle and establish ongoing social relations in a new state, maintain ongoing social connections with the polity from which they originated.”⁵² Transnational migrants literally live out their lives across international borders through “the high intensity of exchanges, the new modes of transacting, and the multiplication of activities that require cross-border travel and contacts on a sustainable basis.”⁵³ The concept of transnationalism seeks to capture the reality of “simultaneous embeddedness in more than one society.”⁵⁴ However, the term “transnationalism” and the reality it seeks to capture are extremely subversive of conventional policy notions and models of migration.⁵⁵ At best, policymakers have admitted the term “circulation” to the debate.⁵⁶ But while circulation is a feature of transnational migration, transnationalism is not simply about continuous or regular physical movement between two places.

Transnationalism first emerged as a way of describing and understanding migrant cultural identities and practices.⁵⁷ Assimilation of immigrants into some fictive "national culture" is a primary goal of many social and cultural integration and social cohesion programmes in the West. However, for transnational migrants "success does not depend so much on abandoning their culture and language to embrace another society as on preserving their original cultural endowment, while adapting instrumentally to a second."⁵⁸ Underlying the cultural emphasis of transnationalism is an argument that hybrid identities and cultures cannot be explained without examining forms of migration and mobility that produce them.⁵⁹

A collection of essays published in 2002 by SAMP assessed the utility of the concept of transnationalism to contemporary African immigration to South Africa.⁶⁰ The editors concluded that much temporary migration to South Africa was of a transnational character and involved a "dense web" of personal and economic links with the country of origin. None of the essays in that particular collection addressed the situation of Zimbabwean migrants but the thesis is now gaining increasing currency. There is certainly no question that migrants who have left Zimbabwe maintain the kinds of "high intensity exchanges" that characterize transnationalism. In fact, the crisis-driven nature of migration, and the dire situation of many people in the country, probably intensifies connectivity with home. But to what extent are Zimbabweans who have migrated embedded in the society and culture of their destination countries? The recency of much migration may suggest that it is really too soon to tell. But part of the equation is the reception they receive on arrival. Are destination countries and communities inclusive or exclusionary? The evidence suggests that Zimbabwean migrants as a whole are denigrated, devalued and marginalized (especially in South Africa and the United Kingdom).⁶¹ In the context of such social, economic and cultural exclusion, it is hard to see how Zimbabwean transnational migrant behaviour will translate into "simultaneous embeddedness" in two societies.

The UN has taken a strong stance on migrant rights through the controversial *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families* and through efforts to have the Convention ratified in more states. None of the states to which Zimbabweans prefer to migrate has ratified the Convention. Their rights are seriously circumscribed in many states, including South Africa and the United Kingdom. The global media has ensured that no one can be unaware of the trials and tribulations of ordinary Zimbabweans under the Mugabe regime. Yet this has not

translated into a great deal of sympathy for those Zimbabweans who have left the country. The world, it seems, would prefer that Zimbabweans stay home and suffer.

Perhaps the most outrageous example of hostility occurred in South Africa in May 2008, when scores of Zimbabweans, along with migrants from other African countries, were hounded out of their homes and communities by rampaging mobs.⁶² This was not an aberration, as hostility towards Zimbabwean migrants has been pervasive in all sections of society in countries such as South Africa and Botswana for many years.⁶³ In South Africa, Zimbabweans elicit the most consistently negative responses of migrants from any country in Africa (with the exception of Nigeria). South Africa's visa regime with Zimbabwe has been so punitive financially that it almost inevitably pushed people into clandestine migration channels. Zimbabweans worldwide have found it extremely difficult to access refugee protection systems. In many countries where they either live beyond the margins of legality or even within them, labour market discrimination finds them struggling to make ends meet.⁶⁴ When migrants are shut out of the labour market in destination countries (or forced to be downwardly mobile into jobs that hardly make best use of their skills and experience) then the ability of households in Zimbabwe to survive is reduced and the migration of more family members becomes an almost inevitable consequence, especially if they are reduced to destitution.

MIGRATION THEMES

The first two chapters in this volume provide important context for the contributions that follow. The initial chapter by historian Alois Mlambo surveys the history of migration to and from Zimbabwe before 1990. The current debate about migration and development is notable for its superficial approach to the history of this relationship and blindness to longstanding arguments about the meaning of development.⁶⁵ Policy-related discussions about contemporary migration in Southern Africa are similarly blinkered regarding the region's long history of cross-border migration.⁶⁶ This is surprising since the historiography of migration in Southern Africa constitutes a particularly voluminous and rich body of scholarship. Indeed, it would be fair to say that the history of cross-border migration in Southern Africa was one of the major pre-occupations of progressive researchers in the 1970s and 1980s.⁶⁷ The disconnect between this body of work and contemporary writing on migration is striking. This is not simply a matter of acknowledging that migration has a history but also of understanding the relevance of this history in the present. The

relationship between migration and development, for example, is not a new debate in Southern Africa. In one way or another, it has been a constant preoccupation of colonial and postcolonial states.

Mlambo shows that, for most of its history, Zimbabwe was primarily a destination for migrants. Prior to the nineteenth century, the Zimbabwe Plateau was peopled by migrants from the north. In the early eighteenth century, there was a wave of migrants from the south fleeing the political and economic upheavals of Zulu expansionism. In the twentieth century, following colonial conquest and extensive land expropriation, white settlers entered the country in considerable numbers. Their numbers peaked at 270,000 in 1970 but would have been even larger, says Mlambo, but for a restrictive immigration selection policy that welcomed whites from the UK and discouraged those from elsewhere.

The contemporary migration and development debate has recently discovered circular migration as if it were a new phenomenon. However, it has been the dominant form of migration in Southern Africa for many decades. Unable to secure enough labour for their farms, plantations and mines, white settlers imported unskilled black migrants from neighbouring Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia. In a region well-known for the temporary nature of unskilled migration, these migrants often stayed in Zimbabwe and eventually cut their links with home. Zimbabwe experienced other types of in-migration as well. During Southern Africa's Thirty Year War of liberation from colonial white rule, for example, Zimbabwe became a destination for white settlers from other newly-independent African countries. Later it was a haven for political refugees from South Africa and Mozambique.

Set against this long history of in-migration, Zimbabwe's recent and rapid transformation into a country of out-migration is particularly stark and dramatic. However, as Mlambo shows, people have always found reasons to leave Zimbabwe. During the period of colonial and settler rule, almost as many settlers left as came. Between 1921 and 1964, for example, the country received a total of 236,330 white immigrants but lost 159,215 (around two-thirds) through emigration. Between 1960 and 1979, more whites left than arrived (202,000 versus 180,000). At independence, whites who feared the loss of racial power and privilege relocated to apartheid South Africa or left the region altogether. Their numbers dropped by two-thirds in the first decade of indepen-

dence and were down to less than 50,000 when the farm seizures began at the turn of the century.

Some black Zimbabweans worked on settler farms and mines (often migrating within the country to do so) but throughout the twentieth century many crossed into South Africa to work, where, despite the humiliations of apartheid, wages were generally higher. As Mlambo points out, there are parts of southern Zimbabwe where migration to South Africa by young men was something of a “rite of passage.” In the 1970s, thousands of Zimbabwean workers were recruited to fill the mine labour shortages in South Africa caused by the recall in 1974 of 120,000 Malawian migrant workers. Political reasons for leaving Zimbabwe also pre-date the 1990s. In the 1970s, for example, many black Zimbabweans opposed to the Smith regime went into exile but returned again after independence. While Zimbabwe has now experienced almost two decades of unrelenting emigration, history suggests that the country’s more natural state is as a country of both origin and destination.

Apart from historical amnesia, another major omission in the migration and development debate is any systematic consideration of internal migration and its relationship with international migration. Indeed, some commentators have pointed out how internal and international migration are often viewed as separate spheres or “disconnected circuits.”⁶⁸ Rather, their causes and origins, the processes involved and their impact and outcomes are so similar that they ought to be considered together. In a volume devoted almost exclusively to international migration from Zimbabwe, it is therefore important to understand what was happening to internal migration during this period and to identify any parallels and connections with out-migration from the country. In her chapter, Deborah Potts provides an overview and analysis of internal migration trends from 1990 to the present.

Potts points out that in relation to the usual economic forces driving internal migration in Africa, Zimbabwe has experienced only two decades of “normality” – the 1980s and 1990s. During the period of white settler control, many Zimbabweans were forcibly displaced from their lands to make way for white settlement. Then they were “subject to a vast array of institutionalized controls and constraints on their freedom of movement and settlement in urban areas.” One effect of such constrained urbanization was to reduce the size of the indigenous urban population below the levels that would have occurred in the absence of such restrictions. In the 1970s, as the independence war escalated, these

restrictions broke down and migration to urban areas increased significantly. Potts sums up the pre-independence experience as follows: "The experience of coerced migration away from areas of economic opportunity (as well as ancestral rights) was sadly familiar to many African households, as was the prevention of migration into areas of economic and social opportunity."

The 1980s are earmarked by Potts as a decade of normality in the sense that post-colonial internal migration in Zimbabwe resembled that of most other African states after independence. Freed of controls on their mobility, rural dwellers headed for new economic opportunity in the towns. Urbanization outpaced the delivery of employment opportunities and an informal sector took root. Most migrants felt insecure about a long-term future in the urban areas and retained close connections with their rural homes. Despite the intense economic competition and lack of a social safety net, Potts still designates this as a "halcyon period" in the eyes of many black Zimbabweans. While the departure of disaffected whites accelerated, that of blacks came to a virtual halt. In 1981, Mugabe recalled all Zimbabwean mineworkers in South Africa and banned any further recruiting. South Africa in the 1980s was also in the violent death throes of apartheid and was not an appealing prospect for migrants. In the first post-independence decade, the new opportunities afforded by unrestrained internal migration "substituted" for international migration, thus reducing its importance to ordinary households.

In the 1990s, as Potts' careful analysis of the available data confirms, there was a dramatic deceleration in urban growth rates in Zimbabwe, especially in the larger towns and cities. Two smaller towns that did continue to experience rapid growth were Mutare and Beit Bridge. Both are border towns whose growth was a function of increasing cross-border movement and informal trade with Mozambique and South Africa respectively. By 2002, virtually all of Zimbabwe's provinces were experiencing net out-migration. None had net in-migration from internal sources, and the population of every province was growing at a rate less than the natural increase due to emigration. Potts, like other commentators, attributes decelerating urbanization and growing emigration to the devastating economic impact of World Bank-led Structural Adjustment.

The data is not yet available to show what has happened to internal migration at the national scale since 2002. However, Potts argues that two major policy interventions (expropriation of commercial farms and urban "cleansing") have had a dramatic impact on livelihoods and precipitated household responses that involve internal and

international migration, or some combination thereof. The expropriation of white-owned farms forced a significant net out-migration of farmworkers, many of whom were the descendents of migrants from other countries. After 2005, the government's Operation Murambatsvina targetted informal housing and employment in the towns, again destroying the livelihoods of thousands. This led to massive internal movement within the cities and "significant short-term out-migration from the towns by people who could find no other urban livelihood or accommodation." Both of these interventions swelled the numbers of households without a livelihood and added to the pool of desperate people forced to try their luck outside the country's borders.

Those sceptical of the developmental value of migration often point to the crippling impact of skills migration from developing to developed countries. The next two chapters in the volume, by Daniel Tevera and Jonathan Crush and by Abel Chikanda, focus on different aspects of the "brain drain" from Zimbabwe which began in the 1990s and has gathered pace ever since. Tevera and Crush lay out two contrasting positions on brain drain causality. One, what we might call the "discourse of poaching," argues that the main imperative for the brain drain comes from the demand of developed countries for highly specialised professionals. A contrary line of thinking – the "discourse of flight" – blames the developing world for its own misfortune. In other words, there would be no brain drain if conditions at home were more conducive for skilled people to stay. Emigration is people voting with their feet, "a flight from spectacular misgovernment, from appalling working conditions and pay levels so low that they are below subsistence."⁶⁹ While Zimbabwe would appear to be an ideal exemplar of the "discourse of flight," skilled Zimbabweans would never have left in such numbers if they had not also been considered valuable assets in the developed world's competitive global quest for skills.

A common approach to the brain drain is the compilation of large macro-scale data sets of migrant flows from which to make inferences about causality and impacts. This approach is favoured by neoliberal researchers anxious to conclude that the "brain drain" is not, in fact, as damaging as the proponents of the "discourse of poaching" maintain.⁷⁰ These conclusions have predictably enjoyed rapid take-up amongst developed country governments. To understand the actual migration behaviour of skilled people and the impact of migration on those who remain, such analyses obviously need to be supplemented with interview-based studies of the attitudes, perceptions and

actions of actual and potential migrants. The problem here is that many studies rely on such small samples that it is hard to know how representative the opinions gleaned actually are. SAMP's alternative approach has been to try and understand decisions about migration through the decision-makers themselves but to do so in a way that is statistically representative and policy-relevant.

Tevera and Crush's chapter on "Discontent and Departure" analyses the results of two surveys undertaken by SAMP in Zimbabwe – one of skilled and professional Zimbabweans working in the country and the other of final-year students in universities and technical colleges. The latter study was undertaken on a regional scale at the prompting of the then Deputy Minister of Home Affairs in South Africa, Charles Nqula, who maintained that departing professionals were essentially "traitors" uncommitted to the development of the region and that the next generation of skilled people would be much more "loyal." Unfortunately, the research showed that the region's potential skills base, unencumbered by job seniority and family obligations, would be even more footloose than their predecessors. The surveys discussed by Tevera and Crush are not strictly comparable since the two sample populations differ and were taken some years apart. For example, levels of discontent were notably higher amongst the student body but we cannot conclude that the students were necessarily more dissatisfied than working professionals at the time. In all likelihood, the dissatisfaction levels of those working in Zimbabwe increased considerably in the years following the survey. If that is indeed the case, then the findings (from related though not identical samples) become instead a commentary on how much worse conditions became between 2001 and 2005.

The two surveys revealed extreme dissatisfaction amongst the skilled residents (actual and in training) with a wide variety of economic and social conditions in the country. On virtually every indicator, a majority said that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Moreover, most also felt that the situation would get worse or much worse in the ensuing five years. Comparing conditions in Zimbabwe with those in their most likely destination of emigration, their home country scored worse on every social and economic measure. These findings are extremely sobering for they are significantly more negative than those for the other countries surveyed in SADC, including South Africa (which also has a major brain drain to contend with). Given the widespread dissatisfaction with current conditions and the deep pessimism about future general and personal pros-

pects, it is unsurprising that the “poachers” of Zimbabwean skills have found such rich pickings. Tevera and Crush also examine the relationship between negative attitudes and emigration intentions. Some 57 percent of the skilled professionals and 71 percent of the students had given emigration a great deal of consideration. Sixty seven percent of the professionals said it was likely or very likely they would emigrate within five years. Seventy percent of the students said they would leave within two.

The magnitude and impact of the medical brain drain from Zimbabwe has garnered much attention in the literature. The debate is an uncomfortable one. Hardly anyone blames Zimbabwe’s doctors and nurses for wanting to leave completely intolerable working conditions in the public health sector. Most would do the same in their position. Yet, at the same time, the healthcare situation for the mass of the population becomes more dire with each one who leaves their post. As Chikanda points out, the brain drain of nurses from Zimbabwe’s public health system began in the late 1990s after other means of redress for their grievances had been tried, and failed. They found a ready market for their skills overseas, especially in the UK, and began to leave in increasing numbers. By 2003, Zimbabwe had become the fourth largest “supplier” of nurses to the UK (after the Philippines, India and South Africa). The number of Zimbabwean health professionals registered in the UK increased from 76 in 1995 to 2,825 in 2003. Of these, over 80 percent were nurses. Nurses came formally through private recruiters and under their own steam.

In 1997, only 56 percent of nursing staff requirements in the Zimbabwean public health system were filled. At that time, the primary reason was movement out of the public into the private system (a career move often accompanied by internal migration). The number of nurses employed in the public sector fell by 19 percent between 1995 and 1999, while the public sector share of nurses fell from 58 to 45 percent in even less time (1996-99). Internal migration (from public to private, and from rural hospitals to towns, where most private practices are located) was often a prelude to international migration. Chikanda argues that many nurses engaged in “step-wise migration,” moving internally into the private sector in order to accumulate the funds (and contacts) to make the move overseas. The migration attitudes of in-country nursing professionals revealed in the survey showed enormous dissatisfaction with working conditions. His survey of nurses found that as many as two-thirds were considering a move to the private sector and that 71 percent were considering leaving the country. The most likely destination was the UK

(30 percent), while 24 percent preferred destinations within Africa (mostly South Africa followed by Botswana). The extent of dissatisfaction in the public health sector was massive, a finding replicated in SAMP surveys.

Brain drains are often said to cause general "skill shortages" and "crises." One remedy, which has so far escaped most Southern African countries, is to make in-migration of skilled migrants a lot easier. In Zimbabwe, this has never really been an option. Working conditions were so poor and continued to deteriorate. Even the most active global recruiting campaign would have had little success. In the medical sector there is no such thing as a general impact of migration. The results are felt immediately by patients and by those workers who have not yet left. When nurses leave the public health system for the private sector or for other countries, it is not only the patients who suffer but the nurses who remain. Chikanda shows how this has produced a vicious circle in Zimbabwe. Nurses leave the country. Those who remain work longer hours, carry heavier patient loads and, particularly in rural areas, are forced into multiple roles for which they have no formal training. Conditions become so taxing and morale so low that they too leave. None of the government's attempts to stop the exodus have had much effect.

Despite the increasingly global spread of the Zimbabwean diaspora, migrants congregate in certain countries and in certain places within those countries. The next three chapters in this volume, by Alice Bloch, JoAnn McGregor and Dominic Pasura, examine different aspects of the Zimbabwean diaspora's recent experience in the United Kingdom. Zimbabwean migrants there tend to be middle-class, educated professionals. The historical linkages between Zimbabwe and the United Kingdom have made this an obvious channel for skilled migrants leaving the country. The result, as Bloch points out, is that the Zimbabwean population of the UK is considerably less diverse socially and economically than that in South Africa. Two-thirds of Bloch's respondents left Zimbabwe after 2000. Over 80 percent had jobs but almost half said they had skills and experience which were not being used in their jobs in the UK. Many were forced into the lower levels of the UK labour market. The rise in the numbers of Zimbabweans doing care work indicates that skilled migrants are being "trapped" in a lower-skilled sector "notable for its exploitative labour market practices."

As Bloch shows, Zimbabweans in the UK are "active economic, social and political transnational actors." Nearly everyone has close family members in Zimbabwe with

whom they maintain frequent contact by telephone, email and text messaging. Eighty percent remit money to Zimbabwe and 19 percent elsewhere, indicating an active global diaspora network. Forty percent remit at least once a month with the amount remitted strongly correlated with income. Family livelihood needs are the main reason for remitting, though 12 percent remitted for the main purpose of buying land or property or investing in business. Zimbabweans in the UK have strong social ties, and migrant networks provide advice about moving, accommodation and help in obtaining visas.

Interest in return migration is strong, with 72 percent definitely wanting to return home. Only six percent definitely did not want to return to Zimbabwe in the future. Having a spouse or partner or children in Zimbabwe was a key factor influencing the desire to return. The longer people had been in the UK, and the more secure their immigration status, the lower the desire to return to Zimbabwe. The minority who definitely did not want to return to Zimbabwe emphasized the political and economic situation and the uncertain future. Bloch also explores whether there is any interest in participating in development activities in Zimbabwe. Only six percent said they were definitely not interested.

As Bloch points out, the UK "care industry" has become the single major employer of Zimbabwean migrants during the last decade. In her survey, nearly 20 percent of migrants were working as carers or care assistants. Drawing on her interviews with those working in the sector, McGregor examines the role and experience of an exploited and extremely dissatisfied group of Zimbabwean migrants. In Zimbabwe, migrants in the sector are disparagingly referred to as "bum technicians" or as "working for the BBC" (British Bottom Cleaners). Most migrants have little experience in care when they arrive in the UK and are forced into the sector only because the jobs are available and they have few alternatives: "Most Zimbabweans working as carers are stressed and frustrated because they have experienced deskilling and a loss of status, and feel trapped in care work, with little prospect of using their qualifications in the UK."

The "care gap" between demand and supply in Britain has been created by an aging population, geographical mobility (which has split up families) and the fact that British women have been less able or willing to perform "traditional" caring roles. The privatisation and outcontracting of local authority residential and home care services has worsened conditions of employment in parts of the labour market, making care

jobs increasingly unattractive to native workers. As McGregor notes: "These changes have been important in spreading temporary work and creating unstable and insecure employment conditions at the bottom end of the job market, contributing to the shortages of carers and the growing importance of migrants." The care gap is increasingly filled by insecure (often irregular) international migrants, although "their service has often been "invisible," and their contribution is little appreciated."

Most Zimbabwean carers had little or no experience in care work prior to arriving in the UK, partly because the majority have skills or training or experience in other professions and partly because there is no care industry as such in Zimbabwe (where care is the responsibility of the family). Zimbabwean carers prefer working for clients who are more independent rather than in nursing and dementia homes. Many work for agencies supplying temporary staff to residential homes. Rates of pay "vary enormously" and carers are typically responsible for their own insurance and receive no benefits. McGregor's respondents described "killing themselves with overwork," pushing themselves to the limit to raise enough money to cover rent and other living expenses in the UK as well as meeting their obligations to support networks of dependants in the UK and in Zimbabwe. Most were unhappy with their social life in Britain, as anti-social hours allowed them little time with family and friends. At work, friction with the permanent staff is exacerbated by the fact that the temporary staff are African or other migrants, compared to a predominantly white permanent staff. Racist attitudes and verbal abuse from clients is also not uncommon. In addition to the racism from clients and permanent staff, the male carers complained of gender discrimination at work. At the same time, many men felt that their masculinity was challenged by jobs that were beneath them.

The different responses to care work by male and female migrants, in a sector in which neither would work voluntarily, shows that the Zimbabwean diaspora experience is profoundly gendered. This theme is taken up in the chapter by Dominic Pasura who shows how gender roles, norms and expectations in Zimbabwe have been challenged and reconfigured once migrants arrive in the UK. In the private spaces of the household, Pasura argues, gender roles and expectations brought from Zimbabwe have come under pressure, leading to intense domestic conflict and the break-up and dissolution of many marriages. The primary reason is that in the UK women have become the primary income earners in many households. Men resent the loss of "status" and their

self-image as breadwinners almost as much as they dislike having to undertake household chores they would certainly never have considered doing back home. Most of Pasura's male respondents referred to the shift in the balance of power in diaspora households when women do paid work: "Women's access to an independent income, which in most cases is more than that of the husband, threatens men's hegemonic masculinity which centres on being the main provider and decision-maker in the family. Most of the women claimed to have control over how they used their salaries, unlike in Zimbabwe."

Quite apart from their new role as primary breadwinners and the financial independence this has brought, the diasporic context has led women to question basic assumptions about traditional gender roles and relations and to carve out new gendered identities. They are able to do this more successfully in Britain than in Zimbabwe, where extended families and kinship ties are central to the production and reproduction of gendered ideologies. Marriage in Zimbabwe is primarily a contract between two families. In the diaspora context, divorced from its social and cultural context, the contract often does not hold up. Other forms of relationship are taking its place. One, discussed by Pasura, is the "move-in household," a form of common-law arrangement where there appears to be a greater degree of autonomy and equality between the two partners in the relationship. The dissolution of conventional marriage partnerships, the invention of new forms and the reconfigured gender relationships that accompany both, do not go uncontested, particularly in the public spaces of churches and public houses. Churches are attended more by women than men, yet the church leaders are generally male and propagate an ideology of male authority and female subservience more in keeping with the pre-migration situation in Zimbabwe. Pubs and *gochi-gochi* (a Shona word for barbecue, where friends get together, roast meat and drink beer) are also male domains where men reassert their crumbling masculinity. Men, not surprisingly, see the regendering of domestic roles as a temporary phase which will come to an end with their eventual return to Zimbabwe.

In contrast to the skilled and highly educated profile of the Zimbabwean migrant cohort in the United Kingdom, that in South Africa is far more diverse, drawn from virtually all social and economic strata of Zimbabwean society. Historically, both Johannesburg and the farms of northern South Africa are established destinations for Zimbabwean migrants. However, as migration from Zimbabwe has become more

generalized, so the profile of migrants in both sites has diversified and become more complex. Based on recent sample survey research, Daniel Makina and Blair Rutherford construct a picture of the migrant population in both centres. There are certainly differences between the two groups of migrants in Johannesburg and on the farms but these are not as significant as one might think, a direct result of the desperate situation of many in Zimbabwe and their willingness to accept employment wherever they can find it.

Johannesburg is the main destination for migrants from Zimbabwe and also has the most diverse Zimbabwean population. Harrowing scenes of desperate Zimbabweans camped in and around the Central Methodist Church in Johannesburg have come to symbolize the sorry plight of the most vulnerable migrants. But these groups, though increasingly common, are far from typical of the Zimbabwean population of Johannesburg. In 2007, Makina undertook a survey of over 4,000 Zimbabwean migrants in inner-city Johannesburg which showed how diverse the migrant population is, even within three high-density inner-city suburbs. The most striking finding was how quickly the influx of Zimbabweans into the city gathered pace after 2000. Only 8 percent of the migrants had arrived in the city before 1999. Between 2001 and 2006, the average annual growth rate for new arrivals was 34 percent.

Zimbabwean migrants in Johannesburg hail from all parts of Zimbabwe. However, the majority (70 percent) are from the southern provinces. Half of the migrants in Johannesburg came from Zimbabwe's two largest cities. In other words, there is significant urban-urban migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa. While a third of the migrants who arrived in Johannesburg in the 1990s were female, the overall proportion of women climbed to 41 percent by 2007. Labour migration to South Africa was once the preserve of the single, unmarried young adults of the Zimbabwean household. This group constituted only 36 percent of Zimbabwean migrants in Johannesburg. As Makina concludes, over half of the migrants are married or cohabiting which "is testimony to the extent to which patterns of migration to South Africa have changed over the last decade. In many Zimbabwean households, anyone who can work is now a candidate for migration whatever their age or marital status." Johannesburg migrants are relatively well-educated with over 50 percent holding diplomas and university degrees. They work in a wide variety of jobs and have very low rates of unemployment. Yet there is considerable deskilling with many people being over-qualified for the jobs they do. Nor are they well paid, with only 20 percent

earning more than R4,000 a month. Despite this, 90 percent remit regularly to Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwean farmworkers in northern South Africa earn a pittance by comparison with most migrants in Johannesburg. The legal minimum wage on the farms was R785 a month in 2005. The farmworkers earned an average R571 a month with 35 percent earning less than R400 a month. Nevertheless, these migrants too, were regular remitters of money and goods to Zimbabwe. In Johannesburg, Zimbabweans work in a multitude of occupations. In the farming zone, there is only one occupation, though a variety of farm tasks. Like migrants in Johannesburg, many working on the farms have prior employment experience in Zimbabwe. Two-thirds of the farmworkers had been employed at home, though only one in ten had prior farm experience. They were employed in a wide variety of occupations, including office work, retail, domestic work, and teaching.

Rutherford compares his results with those of an earlier SAMP survey in the same area to examine how the crisis in Zimbabwe has reshaped the character of migration to the farms of South Africa. One major change is where migrants come from in Zimbabwe. Most farmworkers (who have been crossing the border to work on the farms in small numbers since the mid-twentieth century) used to come from communities just across the border, primarily as seasonal workers. While the majority are still from the south of Zimbabwe, there are now farmworkers in the border zone from many other parts of the country, including Harare. Other changes identified by Rutherford include a reduction in the numbers of young migrants and a dramatic increase in those over the age of 30, a marked increase in married migrants of both sexes and a more educated workforce (a common complaint of Zimbabwean workers now is that they are too educated and skilled for farm work). In 1998, the majority of farmworkers were temporary (often seasonal) workers but this pattern seems to be giving way to a more extensive "permanent" workforce. With labour in abundance and no chance of employment at home, workers are tending to stay on the same farm and build patronage relations with farmers.

In 1998, the proportion of migrant farmworkers who had entered South Africa without documentation was over 90 percent. This made them very vulnerable to arrest and deportation when they were off the farm, or when the police raided the farms (often just before payday with the connivance of farmers). More recently, the legal status of farm-

workers has, somewhat inadvertently, improved. For the first decade of ANC rule, the South African government pursued a relentless rights-disregarding campaign of arrest and deportation of migrants from neighbouring states, under powers inherited from the apartheid government. Those draconian powers were meant to be softened somewhat by the Immigration Act of 2002 but deportations and rights abuses by agents of the state continued in defiance of the law and the Constitution. Between 1994 and 2008, over 2 million people were detained and forcibly removed from South Africa in a policy widely regarded as a complete and extremely expensive failure. The numbers would have been even higher but for the well-known propensity of the police to accept bribes in exchange for not arresting migrants or tearing up their documentation. The disruption to lives and livelihoods has been immense, an aspect of the migration and development "debate" which has received scant attention globally.

Zimbabweans have increasingly borne the brunt of deportations. In 2005, Zimbabwean deportations exceeded those of Mozambicans for the first time and have since risen to over 150,000 per annum. Denied access to the South African refugee system or documentation to work in South Africa, Zimbabweans became easy prey for a dispirited police force anxious to boost its "crime-fighting" statistics. The result has been the dangerous and corrupting "revolving door" of expulsion, re-entry, evasion, arrest and re-deportation. The policy shift should spell relief for migrant farmworkers who have been preyed on mercilessly by the police in Limpopo Province for many years. However, at the same time, the Immigration Act also regularized a set of very messy, local arrangements (including farmers issuing their own "work permits") that prevailed in the area for the first decade after apartheid. Farmers have been applying for, and been granted, corporate work permits under the Act to hire a specified number of foreign workers. Unfortunately, legal status has not made much difference to the working and living conditions of the average Zimbabwean migrant farmworker.

SAMP has consistently tried to understand migration in terms both of its general macro-level characteristics and trends and as experienced through the eyes of migrants themselves. This volume therefore discusses the results of large-scale, statistically representative national household surveys and provides examples of how migration is experienced, talked about and interpreted by individual migrants. One of the major shifts in migration over the last two decades is growing female cross-border migration. In the

case of Zimbabwe, this process has been accelerated by the economic collapse of the country. Initially, in the 1990s, the majority of female Zimbabwean migrants worked in informal cross-border trade. In the last decade, this has changed dramatically, as unemployed women have looked to use their formal sector skills and experience in South Africa. The chapter in this volume by Kate Lefko-Everett examines this shift from the perspective of the women themselves.

Lefko-Everett provides a mechanism for the “voices” of migrant women to be heard, through extensive verbatim quotation from in-depth individual interviews and focus groups. The women are extremely direct and frank about the factors encouraging migration from Zimbabwe. They are in South Africa out of necessity, not because they find it a pleasant place to be. SAMP has shown how pervasive and virulent xenophobic attitudes are in contemporary South Africa.⁷¹ All foreigners from Africa are disliked, and those from Zimbabwe even more than most. While the xenophobic violence of May 2008 was directed at foreign migrants in general, many Zimbabweans were caught up in the firestorm – at least five of those who were killed were Zimbabwean.⁷² Xenophobia was not a new experience for migrant women in South Africa, however, as the women’s “voices” reproduced here clearly show.

Crossing into South Africa, as Lefko-Everett’s respondents show, is an extremely hazardous undertaking. There is a clear preference for legal border crossing, not least because it is much safer. At the same time, many women are forced into irregular channels by costs and the restrictive visa regime between South Africa and Zimbabwe. Once in those channels they face almost certain physical hardship, exploitation and, in many cases, sexual assault. The interaction between border-crossing and sexual violence in South Africa is a shameful by-product of draconian, but ultimately pointless and ineffective border controls in Southern Africa. Do borders serve any function other than the sexual and material gratification of those, including male agents of the state, who prey on disempowered migrant women?

The question of the “purpose” of borders within Southern Africa is also raised by Nelson Pophiwa’s chapter on clandestine informal trading across the Mozambican and Zimbabwe border. In the eyes of the state, borders are there to clearly demarcate the territorial limits of the nation-state and its differentiation from its neighbours. Zimbabwe, however, has six neighbours and thousands of kilometres of unguarded and unpatrolled borders. The challenge to the state comes when the borders are ineffective physical

barriers, when people have reasons for crossing them and when the state cannot prevent them from doing so by force or deterrent.

As Pophiwa points out, large-scale informal trading under the noses of the authorities took off in the 1990s along the border with Mozambique and exploded with the economic meltdown in Zimbabwe. The state engages in sporadic high-profile efforts to crack down on "smuggling" (defined as such for its supposed illegality) without a great deal of success. The trade is simply too important to households that have few other means of economic survival. The state blames syndicates and gangs when, in truth, most "smugglers" are ordinary men, women and children. This border is considerably less dangerous for border-crossers than others (such as the South Africa-Zimbabwe boundary). This is because, in the study area at least, the border cuts communities of similar culture and language in two. Local cross-border movement to visit friends and relatives has been going on for many years. Everyone knows about the paths across the border and can guide those who come from outside the district, adding to their income. In other words, it is the very existence of the border that makes "smuggling" an economically attractive proposition. And it is the fact that people know the border so well, through long residence in the border zone, that renders it ineffectual as a means of controlling "smuggling." The best the state can hope for is to drive the trade through the formal border post where officials can collect duties from some and demand bribes from the rest.

The next three chapters in the volume examine the central question of how households have managed to survive in a country that is in total economic disarray. As argued earlier, remittances from those who do leave are the key to unlocking why more people do not flee collapsing states and how households keep going in intolerable circumstances. Because so much of the remittance flow to Zimbabwe is informal in nature, there are no reliable estimates of the total sums involved. The chapter by Daniel Tevera, Abel Chikanda and Jonathan Crush presents the results of the first national survey of remittance-receiving households in Zimbabwe, conducted in 2005 by SAMP. In the year prior to the survey, 75 percent of migrant-sending households had received remittances. Although the remittance package (in rand terms) was not large (an average of R3,700 per annum), the regularity of remitting behaviour is very striking, with 62 percent of households receiving cash remittances at least once a month. Almost two-thirds had received remittances in the form of goods in the year prior to the survey, including foodstuffs (for example,

maize-meal, sugar, salt, and cooking oil) as well as consumer goods (such as bicycles, radios, sofas, agricultural inputs and building materials.) Informal channels are definitely the preferred method of remitting with 70 percent either bringing the money in person or sending it with a relative, friend or co-worker. This is enabled by an extremely regular pattern of home visits, confirming that the vast majority of migrants see themselves as “temporary exiles” engaged in circular migration.

The survey found that various factors influence the amounts remitted by individual migrants. For instance, heads of households remit more on average than their children. Men remit slightly more than women – an indication of greater labour market access and higher earning potential in destination countries. Those in the 40-59 age group remit more than migrants in any other age category, probably because they have the greatest number of dependants. Married migrants remit more than those who are single for similar reasons. The geographical destination of migrants also affects the volume of remittance flows. Migrants overseas remit more on average than those within Southern Africa. This is consistent with another finding – that skilled migrants tend to remit more than those who are unskilled or semi-skilled. However, the gap is not massive, suggesting that the latter probably remit a much greater proportion of what they do earn.

The bulk of remittances are spent on basic livelihood needs. Food purchase is particularly important but remittances are also vital in providing for clothing, transportation, school fees, housing and medical treatment. Remittances are the main source of household income for the surveyed households but the situation is precarious as the vast majority of households depend on just one or two migrants. Forty-two percent of households in the survey said they spend 40 percent or more of their income on food. Twelve percent spend over 70 percent of their income on food. Very little of the remittance package is available for savings or investment in income-generating activity. Without remittance flows, the situation of many Zimbabwean households would be even more dire. Remittances reduce vulnerability to hunger, ill-health and poverty in both rural and urban households. Households with migrants go without basic necessities less often. Remittances also allow families to keep children in school and to put roofs over the heads of household members.

The authors point to a double irony. Without the economic crisis in Zimbabwe, migration would not have reached the volume that it has. In turn, migration (through remit-

tances) has staved off the worst aspects of that crisis for many households, and even kept the national economy afloat: "However, the depth of the crisis and the struggle for survival mean that remittances are rarely used in a systematic or sustained manner for what might broadly be called "developmental" purposes. That is not why migrants remit and those are not the uses to which remittances are put."

The other two chapters dealing specifically with remittances add considerable nuance to the national picture sketched by Tevera, Chikanda and Crush. In their chapter, Sarah Bracking and Lloyd Sachikonye discuss the results of two surveys of urban households in Zimbabwe, conducted a year apart in the same cities (2005 and 2006). In 2006, 50 percent of households in Harare and Bulawayo were receiving remittances from outside the country. The proportion of households receiving cash remittances at least once a month was over 70 percent in both years. In a single year, there was an increase in the number of households reporting that the receipt of goods was a regular event (from 38 percent to 52 percent), a reflection of the increasingly empty store shelves in both cities. Another significant shift in a single year was a noticeable increase in personal conveyance as the main channel for remitting. Use of all other channels (including entrusting remittances to friends or co-workers) declined between 2005 and 2006. A decline in the use of formal sector banks for remitting corresponded to increased reliance on informal mechanisms of currency exchange. In 2006, over 50 percent of remittance-receiving households used money changers (up from 40 percent in 2005.) As the authors point out, this signifies the ever-greater and unrealistic gap between official and parallel rates during the survey period and suggests a consolidation of the parallel market.

Bracking and Sachikonye also reflect on the struggle between state and citizen over control of the remittance package. Migrant remittances clearly play an important role in household poverty reduction. However, "not only are Zimbabwean dollar receipts subject to constant devaluation, remittance receivers have experienced expulsion and government extortion." Although households resist the pressure from the government to surrender remittance receipts into the formal system, the market value of remittances does not stay constant at the parallel rate. The Zimbabwean ruling elite view remittances as somehow belonging to them, and punitive taxation regimes and spurious taxes are often devised to capture some of the income sent by migrants. The government's "Home Link" scheme failed because "the indirect tax built into the scheme was punitive in relation to the value of the money." However, the lucrative rents and profits to be found in

money changing and money supply in transactional exchange between the informal and formal economy benefits the “cash barons” at the heart of government. “Spoils politics” undermines the pecuniary value of remittances, by reproducing chronic scarcity in goods markets, and by failing the citizens in terms of the welfare obligations of government to the poor.

The chapter on remittances by France Maphosa explores the relationship between remittances and irregularity in the context of migration to South Africa from a rural district in southern Zimbabwe. Undocumented migrants in South Africa face a double bind. Their irregular employment status makes it difficult to access the formal labour market without the connivance of South African employers seeking cheap, exploitable labour. This means that even those who do obtain employment are underpaid and have less to remit home. Their irregular legal status makes them vulnerable to arrest and deportation with consequent loss of employment and earnings. To avoid deportation, they are forced to pay bribes to the police. They keep their jobs (until the next arrest) but have less to remit. Nevertheless, in Maphosa’s study, nearly 80 percent of rural households surveyed still received regular remittances. As in the towns, remittances are used primarily for household livelihood needs. There is some investment in agriculture (stock purchase and buying seeds and fertilizer) but no significant investment in other income-generating activity. While virtually all remittances go through informal channels, undocumented migrants take much greater personal risks if they go home as often as they would like. As a result, these migrants are connected with their home communities by the activities of *omalayisha* (transport operators) who ferry goods and cash from migrants to their rural homes.

Maphosa shows how irregular migrants seek to minimize the odds of being arrested and deported by “blending” as far as possible into local communities and populations. Most of these migrants have learned one or two South African languages as the South African police often use cultural signifiers and lack of language proficiency as markers of “foreignness.” The local symbols and products acquired by migrants extend to dress, music, dances, style of walking, mannerisms and food. The term *injiva* describes a distinct migrant way of life, a combination of characteristics such as language, dressing, preferences for music (usually the *kwaito* genre), type of dance, style of walking, mannerisms, food preferences and even temperament. As Maphosa argues, the introduction of cultural symbols and practices into the rural community by young migrants often causes conflict with elders who decry the loss of “local cultural values” due to migration.

The final two chapters in this volume build on Maphosa's examination of the reception of Zimbabwean migrants in countries of destination, especially South Africa. Hostility towards foreign migrants has been a pervasive and troubling feature of post-apartheid South Africa, culminating in widespread violence against non-citizens in May 2008 which killed over 60 people and displaced over 100,000. The "dark side of democracy" was of little relevance to Zimbabweans prior to the disintegration of their own country and the emergence of South Africa as a migrant destination. As migration increased, South Africans had very little difficulty transferring their general dislike of foreign nationals to Zimbabweans, migrants from a neighbouring country with strong historical ties to South Africa. A leading force in the reconfiguration of Zimbabweans as a threat to South Africans was the South African media. The chapter by Aquilina Mawadza and Jonathan Crush shows how the xenophobic media sentiment of the 1990s was repackaged to represent Zimbabwean migration to South Africa. The negative metaphors associated with migration came to epitomize media coverage of Zimbabweans coming to and living in South Africa. The chapter shows how three dominant anti-immigration metaphors (the migrant as alien, migration as an unnatural disaster and migration as a process of invasion) were, and continue to be, applied to Zimbabwean migrants. The South African media is always quick to distance itself from xenophobia but this chapter leaves little doubt about media complicity.

While the media and ordinary citizens have responded with venom to the growing presence of Zimbabweans in South Africa, the government, in contrast, has adopted a position of "studied indifference." The final chapter in this volume, by Tara Polzer, analyses the institutional response to Zimbabwean migration. After reviewing the evidence she concludes that the South African government "has failed to meet its legal obligations to Zimbabwean migrants, including its obligation to prevent refoulement and to uphold basic constitutional rights." The government's "business as usual" approach means an inability or unwillingness to articulate an overall policy position on migration from Zimbabwe. Zimbabwean migrants are treated (and mistreated) as if this was just another unwanted migration movement to the country, rather than a crisis-driven influx requiring a coordinated policy response. So total has been the silence from the central government that other levels of government have no guidance or operational framework with which to work. Polzer attributes the paralysis within government concerning Zimbabweans in South Africa to South Africa's foreign policy stance on Zimbabwe and associated tendency to downplay the magnitude of the social and economic crisis within Zimbabwe itself.

Governmental paralysis has made life in South Africa extremely challenging for most Zimbabwean migrants. There is an assumption that civil society organizations have managed to pick up much of the slack. Polzer challenges this view, arguing that civil society has also failed to develop a coherent response to the challenge of Zimbabwean migration. The cumulative impact of actors dealing with legal and protection issues and those providing social welfare has been relatively small in relation to numbers and needs. Furthermore, "where Zimbabwean issues have brought together a wider range of South African civil society institutions, including labour unions and social movements, this has been mainly focussed on advocacy regarding the situation within Zimbabwe, rather than the plight of Zimbabweans in South Africa." The South African Human Rights Commission, which abandoned an anti-xenophobia campaign in 2002 in favour of rights issues affecting citizens, has also abdicated its potential role as a voice on Zimbabwean migration.

The economic and social collapse of Zimbabwe has been both a consequence and a cause of migration. The transformation of Zimbabwe into one of the world's larger migrant-sending states has largely been prompted by the intolerable situation at home and the need to find employment to support those who remain behind. No one knows quite how many Zimbabweans have left, or exactly how much they send home. In an especially vicious cycle, out-migration of the skilled, in particular, weakened the economy and accelerated the collapse of public services. That, in turn, has provided others with greater incentive to leave. But the final meltdown has been delayed precisely because migrants remit and households could survive, buying food and fuel, paying school fees and meeting medical expenses. Yet, the reception that migrants have received outside their own country has been anything but welcoming. Acceptance and integration have certainly not been the experience of most Zimbabweans in the major destination countries of South Africa, the United Kingdom and Botswana. Given this, and the reasons for leaving in the first place, it is worth asking, in conclusion, about the likelihood of return migration if conditions were to change in Zimbabwe. Or, to put it another way, what would have to change to entice people back?

Daniel Makina put this question to Zimbabweans in Johannesburg. Over two-thirds said they would return for good if Zimbabwe were to normalize. A third did say they would stay in South Africa, but only 6 percent said they would remain permanently. Of the 72 percent who would return home, 48 percent said they would want to return

and set up a business, 25 percent said they would want to be “gainfully employed,” 14 percent would want to work in the NGO sector and the rest simply said they would “settle.” Twenty-one percent of the total sample (and 62 percent of those who would stay in South Africa) said they would want to establish a business in South Africa. These findings suggest, first, that the vast majority of Zimbabweans want to go back if the conditions are right. And even those who do not want to go back straightaway would want to invest in and grow businesses at home. Second, perhaps sceptical that Zimbabwe’s unemployment problem will be easily overcome, many migrants see entrepreneurship as the way forward, possibly indicating that the émigré experience has encouraged a more entrepreneurial spirit and knowledge.

The similarities with Zimbabwean migrants in the United Kingdom are striking. Nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of Zimbabweans interviewed by Alice Bloch said they definitely wanted to return and a further 22 percent might want to return. As in South Africa, only 6 percent definitely did not want to return. Bloch also found that migrants with a partner or children in Zimbabwe had even higher rates of potential return (over 80 percent). Length of time and legal status in the UK were also important determinants. In general, as Bloch shows, the longer people had been in the UK and the more secure their immigration status, the lower the desire to return to Zimbabwe. Only half of those with UK or EU citizenship wanted to return, for example.

What does “normalization” mean for Zimbabweans abroad? Improvement in the political situation was mentioned by nearly 90 percent as a precondition for return. Other preconditions include an improvement in the economy (mentioned by over 80 percent), the security situation (over 70 percent) and the health situation (over 60 percent). Finally, when asked what development activities they were interested in pursuing in Zimbabwe, 62 percent said that investment in business was a priority. As with migrants in South Africa, entrepreneurial activity rates most highly, surely an encouraging sign for the rebuilding of a crisis-ridden country that has seen its “best and brightest” leave over the last two decades, but not necessarily for good.

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THE TRUTH WILL COME OUT

My grandmother came to Johannesburg long ago before my mother was born. My mother was born in 1937 and she is the last born of nine children. My grandmother worked here for so long and she told us her mother had worked in South Africa too. My mother never came here though. Only my aunties and uncle would come here. Some came and stayed forever and some just worked for a few years and went home. My father was a policeman during the time of Smith and the government of South Africa allowed the police to come here so my father came and looked for work here as a policeman. He went up and down.

Immediately after finishing school in Zimbabwe I went for an interview to be a teacher. I passed my interview but when we were supposed to go for a teaching course I found my name wasn't there. I don't want to speak about the government of Zimbabwe but at that time they used surnames. This is an Ndebele, this is a Shona. They gave preference to Shonas even if they did not pass the interview. I was just disappointed so I came to South Africa instead. At first I was a garden boy and later I became a houseman. Now I am a salesman in a small shop for bags and jewellery. My sister is working as a domestic worker and my brother-in-law is working for a company in Germiston. Working hours are too long for me: from 8 o'clock to 5 o'clock and there is no lunch hour. You have to eat while you are serving the customers. I earn R650 a month. From there I just go to my flat and sleep. There is nothing else I do except on Sundays I go to church.

The police here are always a problem. They keep on asking you this and that. I hate to be asked the same thing by the same police every day. Sometimes my aunt has to come and talk to them so I am not arrested. I don't accept that foreigners are the crime causers or whatever. When I came to South Africa, I found that the jails here were there for South Africans. So it wasn't only foreigners who were committing crimes. The police are afraid to arrest South Africans because they are told that someone will come to their house and kill the children. So the police turn to us foreigners because they know we can't do anything. They arrest us to keep themselves busy so that the government will think they are doing their job by saying "I arrested 1,000 immigrants." But they are running away from the fact that they are not arresting their fellow South Africans. They also will never stop the white man in the street and ask him "where are your documents?" I do agree that some foreigners do crimes but when you take the percentage I can say that over 90% of criminals are South Africans. I always tell myself one day the truth will come out.



Chapter Two

A History of Zimbabwean Migration to 1990

Alois S. Mlambo

Population migration into and out of present-day Zimbabwe long pre-dates European conquest and the imposition of artificial colonial borders. Not only did people move from one area to another as need arose, ethnic boundaries were fluid enough to allow individuals or groups to move in or out of population clusters and ethnic groupings with relative ease. Movement did not cease after the establishment of colonial boundaries either. These arbitrary borders divided families, clan groups and ethnic communities between different colonies. Examples abound: the Kalanga of southwestern Zimbabwe and northeastern Botswana; the Shangaan, Venda and Tsonga peoples of southern Zimbabwe, southern Mozambique and northern South Africa; the Manyika and Ndau people of eastern Zimbabwe and central Mozambique; and the various ethnic groups astride the Zambian-Malawi, the Zambian-Zimbabwean and the Zambian-Angolan borders, as well as the border between Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Not surprisingly, local communities generally ignored these colonial impositions and went about their normal business with their kith and kin, crossing borders without regard to colonial laws and immigration requirements. They also crossed borders in search of employment, and for other reasons, and continue to do so to this day.

This chapter traces the long history of Zimbabwean migration from precolonial times to 1990.¹ For much of this history, Zimbabwe was a destination country for migrants.

Population movement into the area began with the peopling of the Zimbabwe Plateau. In the nineteenth century, there was an influx of groups from the south fleeing the Mfecane/Difaqane in South Africa. In the twentieth century, white immigrants from Europe and South Africa established farms and plantations and mines where they employed black migrants from neighbouring countries such as Malawi and Mozambique. Southern Africa's "Thirty Years War" of liberation (from the 1960s to the 1990s) brought white immigrants fleeing independence in Africa and black refugees from the civil war in Mozambique.

Zimbabwe was also a "sending" country during the twentieth century although the numbers were generally much smaller. Migrant workers from some parts of Zimbabwe engaged in circular migration for work in South Africa. Zimbabwe's own war of liberation forced many blacks into exile in the 1970s. They returned at independence, just as whites began to leave in growing numbers. However, in general, Zimbabwe was more of a receiving than a sending country before 1990. This was to change in the 1990s as the country was dramatically transformed into a leading migrant sending country. The primary purpose of this chapter is to situate this post-1990 transformation in historical context to identify the distinctive aspects of the current "exodus" when compared to earlier rounds of migration to and from the country.

PRECOLONIAL PEOPLING OF THE ZIMBABWE PLATEAU

Zimbabwe was originally the home of hunter-gathering, stone-age people who are believed to have inhabited the region from 100,000 years ago onwards. They were eventually displaced by the Bantu, an iron-age people with skills in mining and iron smelting, coming in from the north. By the year 1000, a cattle-keeping culture, referred to by archaeologists as the Leopard Kopje culture, had developed in south-western Zimbabwe, reaching its climax around 1100 with the development of Mapungubwe on the Shashe-Limpopo River confluence. This cattle-keeping and farming community traded in ivory and gold with traders from as far afield as China.

The Mapungubwe culture went into decline after 1300 with the rise of the Great Zimbabwe culture, with its capital at the Great Zimbabwe complex, built between 1200 and 1450, south-east of the modern Zimbabwean city of Masvingo. Like its Mapungubwe predecessor, the Great Zimbabwe culture was based on cattle-keeping and farming, as well as trade in gold with the Swahili coast. In its turn, this kingdom went into decline

from about 1450 onwards, with some groups moving westwards to found the Torwa state whose capital was at Khami near the present-day city of Bulawayo. Others moved north-westwards to establish the Munhumutapa Kingdom, which by 1500 had expanded as far as the Indian Ocean and whose economy was based on gold mining and trade. The Munhumutapa Kingdom eventually went into decline in the face of growing Portuguese influence along the Indian Ocean. At the end of the 1600s, a new political power, the Rozvi Changamire state, emerged and remained powerful until it was destroyed, in turn, by the Nguni invasion from the south during the Mfecane/Difaqane.

In the early 1800s, political and demographic upheaval in the eastern part of South Africa (known to historians as the Mfecane/Difaqane), led to population movements that greatly impacted upon the demographic profile of the land between the Limpopo and the Zambezi and beyond. Some attribute the Mfecane/Difaqane, and the resultant depopulation of large swathes of land in the South African interior, to aggressive nation-building campaigns by the Zulu under Shaka.² Others have labelled this view a self-serving historical invention and rationalization to justify white occupation of the interior with the excuse that it was unoccupied when they arrived because of the Mfecane/Difaqane. They attribute the population dispersal to drought and environmental degradation, trade, and the advance of white settlement. Whatever the causes, the Mfecane/Difaqane induced northward population movements which had far-reaching political and demographic effects on Zimbabwe.

In the 1820s, the first wave of Nguni migrants from the south under Zwangendaba destroyed the Rozvi/Changamire Kingdom, before crossing the Zambezi in 1835 and proceeding further north, reaching Lake Tanganyika in the late 1860s. Another group originating from northern Natal in the 1820s, under the leadership of Soshangane, devastated the area around present-day Maputo and then established the Gaza Empire, part of which encompassed the Shona-speaking groups of eastern Zimbabwe, such as the Manyika and the Ndaus. Lastly came the Ndebele under Mzilikazi. Having initially settled in the northern Transvaal, Mzilikazi and his followers were forced to move northwards in 1837 because of the encroachment of Boers from the south. They eventually settled in southwestern Zimbabwe and established the Ndebele Kingdom incorporating local Rozvi groups in the process. Ndebele hegemony over southwestern Zimbabwe was to be broken only with the arrival of European colonialism at the turn of the century when white immigration changed the political and demographic profile of the country even further.

WHITE MIGRATION, 1890–1990³

White hunters, adventurers, explorers and missionaries had long traversed the land between the Limpopo and the Zambezi before British colonization in 1890, but none had settled permanently in the region. This was all to change with the arrival of a group of approximately 700 whites, calling themselves the Pioneer Column. Armed and funded by Cecil John Rhodes through his recently-established British South Africa Company (BSAC), this advance party of British imperialism claimed the territory that was to be known as Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) for Britain by raising the Union Jack at Fort Salisbury (now Harare) in 1890. Thereafter, the BSAC and subsequent self-governing administrations after 1923 made determined efforts to encourage white immigration into the country in line with Rhodes' dream of developing Rhodesia as a "white man's country."⁴

Early white immigration was fuelled in the run-up to the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910. There was a large inflow of mostly English-speaking immigrants from South Africa between 1901 and 1911 (from 11,000 to over 23,000), making this the fastest white population growth decade in the entire period of colonial rule (Table 2.1).⁵ Negotiated on favourable terms for the Afrikaners, the Union helped to push English-speaking South Africans into Rhodesia.⁶

Table 2.1: White Population Increase 1891-1969

Year	Total	% Increase
1891 (Est.)	1,500	-
1904	12,596	14.0
1911	23,606	87.0
1921	33,620	42.0
1931	49,910	48.0
1941	68,954	38.0
1951	136,017	97.0
1960	218,000	60.0
1969	262,000	14.0

Source: *Rhodesia, Census of Population 1904-1969* (Salisbury: CSO, 1969), p. 62.

Increased white immigration was also a result of vigorous efforts by the BSAC government to entice white farmers into the country. Rhodes' colonizing project had been driven by the belief and hope that the land north of the Limpopo had large gold deposits that would compare favourably with, if not surpass, those on the Rand. While the country did have some gold deposits, they were nowhere near as abundant as had been envisioned. The BSAC government turned to vigorously promoting commercial agriculture from 1902 onwards, once it "accepted the unpalatable fact that gold-mining was never going to constitute a basis for great wealth on the lines of the Witwatersrand."⁷ In 1908, it adopted a white-agriculture policy that deliberately promoted settler agriculture; this included reducing land prices to prospective settlers and expanding the foreign and contract labour supply system to provide sufficient agricultural labour.⁸

The Company government's commitment to settler agriculture included the establishment of recruiting and promotional offices in London and Glasgow, and a Land Settlement Department and Land Bank in Salisbury. As a result "there began a steady, if not very large, stream of immigrants of a good type, many being experienced farmers."⁹ The Company also enticed immigrants through its own farming and ranching activities. From 1907, Company ranches "with pure-bred dairy of beef stock, citrus estates with large irrigation schemes, experimental tobacco estates with warehouses, and farms where mealies were the main crop, were acquired, stocked and equipped."¹⁰

After a hiatus during World War One, white immigration picked up again.¹¹ The attainment of Responsible government in 1923, the subsequent provision of development assistance by the British Government, and the British inauguration of a sponsored three-year settlement scheme led to substantial immigration from 1924 to 1928. The numbers declined from 1931 to 1936 because of the Great Depression and the deliberate Rhodesian government policy of discouraging immigration in order to minimize unemployment. Immigration also declined considerably during World War Two due to the difficulties of overseas travel.

After the War, immigration increased dramatically as hundreds of demobilised British soldiers entered the country as part of the Rhodesian government's post-war settlement scheme. In 1948, a record 17,000 immigrants arrived.¹² Over 100,000 Africans were moved from their lands to accommodate the new arrivals.¹³ Additional immigrants were attracted by job and other economic prospects in the rapidly-industrialising Rhodesian

economy. Job reservation provided unlimited opportunities for white immigrants who could live “a privileged, comfortable life.”¹⁴

Economic depression in the Central African Federation from 1956 to 1958, and the rise of militant African nationalism, led to a decline in white immigration. This decline continued in the 1960s when economic sanctions were imposed on Rhodesia after its unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) in November 1965. Escalating military clashes between the regime and nationalist liberation forces made the country unattractive as a destination for European migrants. However, some immigrants entered the country fleeing black rule in African countries such as Kenya, Zambia and the Congo. The country also received large numbers of immigrants from Mozambique and Angola in 1975 following the end of Portuguese colonial rule in those countries.

Throughout the twentieth century, foreign-born whites outnumbered those born in the country (Table 2.2). The dominance of immigration over natural increase was still evident as late as 1969 when approximately 59 percent of the white population were foreign-born. Of these, over 55 percent arrived after World War Two (Table 2.3).¹⁵

Table 2.2: White Population by Country of Birth, 1901-1956

Year	% Zimbabwe	% South Africa	% UK/Eire	% Other
1901	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1904	10.1	27.3	44.4	18.2
1911	13.6	30.7	40.9	14.8
1921	24.7	34.6	31.4	9.3
1926	29.1	32.6	29.2	9.1
1931	29.2	34.5	27.1	9.2
1936	34.1	32.8	23.8	9.3
1941	34.1	27.9	26.4	11.6
1946	37.7	26.4	18.3	17.6
1951	31.4	30.4	28.8	9.4
1956	32.5	28.9	28.1	10.5

Source: A. Rogers and C. Frantz, *Racial Themes in Zimbabwe: The Attitudes and Behaviour of the White Population* (New Haven: Yale University, 1962), p. 14.

Table 2.3: White Population by Country of Birth, 1969

Place of Birth	No.	%
Rhodesia	92,934	40.7
Britain	52,468	23.0
South Africa	49,585	21.7
Portugal	3,206	1.4
Elsewhere	30,103	13.2

N= 228,296

Source: *Southern Africa: Immigration from Britain, A Fact Paper by the International Defence and Aid fund* (London: IDAF, 1975), p. 17.

Until 1961, net migration consistently outnumbered natural increase (Table 2.4). One reason for the slow increase of the locally-born white population, at least in the early period, was the paucity of white women in the country. Until 1911, the gap between the sexes was very wide. Thereafter it narrowed as more vigorous efforts were made to attract female immigrants. The percentage of white women in the country rose from 34 percent to 44 percent between 1911 and 1921. Increasingly, the white population began to resemble that of older settler societies (Table 2.5).¹⁶

Table 2.4: White Net Migration and Natural Increase, 1901-1969

Period	Net Migration	Natural Increase	Total Increase
1901-1911	11,083	1,491	12,574
1911-1921	5,835	4,179	10,014
1921-1931	10,145	6,145	16,290
1931-1941	11,025	9,019	19,044
1941-1951	50,066	16,576	66,642
1951-1961	47,097	38,811	85,908
1961-1969	(-) 13,914	20,706	6,792

Source: *Census of Population, 1969*, p. 3.

Table 2.5: White Population Sex Ratio, 1901-1956

Year	Sex Ratio (Male:Female x 100)
1901	278
1904	246
1911	194
1921	130
1926	126
1931	120
1936	116
1941	113
1946	116
1951	111
1956	107

Source: Rogers and Frantz, *Racial Themes in Southern Rhodesia*, p. 15.

Table 2.6: Racial Composition of Population, 1911-1951

Year	White	Asian	"Coloured"	Black*
1911	23,730	880	2,040	752,000
1920	32,620	1,210	2,000	850,000
1930	47,910	1,660	2,360	1,048,000
1940	65,000	2,480	3,800	1,390,000
1947	88,000	3,090	4,750	1,781,000
1948	101,000	3,280	4,880	1,833,000
1949	114,000	3,400	5,000	1,895,000
1950	125,000	3,600	5,200	1,957,000
1951	136,017	4,343	5,964	2,000,000

* These were estimates based on periodic population counts. The first comprehensive census of the African population was not until 1962, although limited sample surveys were taken in 1948, 1953 and 1955.

Source: Southern Rhodesia, Central Statistical Office, *Official Yearbook of Southern Rhodesia* (Salisbury: Rhodesia Printing and Publishing Company, 1952), p. 130.

Because natural population growth was slow and immigration flows were limited by highly selective government immigration policies, the white population was increasingly outstripped by the African population so that the dream of developing Rhodesia as a white man's colony remained unfulfilled (Table 2.6).

A prominent feature of the history of white migration was its high turnover rate. For every ten immigrants who entered the country between 1921 and 1926, seven left.¹⁷ Between 1926 and 1931, the ratio was 5:3 and between 1931 and 1936, 9:7. An analysis of net migration between 1921 and 1964 shows that, in this period, Rhodesia received a total of 236,330 white immigrants but lost 159,215, or 67 percent, through emigration (Table 2.7).

Table 2.7: Net White Migration, 1921-1964

Period	Immigrants	Emigrants	Net Migration
1921-26	9,400	6,676	+ 2,724
1926-31	20,000	12,685	+ 7,421
1931-36	9,000	7,058	+ 2,032
1941-46	8,250	6,192	+ 2,058
1946-51	64,634	17,447	+ 47,187
1955-59	74,000	39,000	+ 35,000
1960-64	38,000	63,000	- 25,000

Source: *Census of Population*, 1969, p. 168.

White emigration increased during the UDI years as the economic and political situation deteriorated and the military conflict between the regime and nationalist liberation forces intensified. In the first few years of UDI, however, the country actually recorded net migration gains, partly as a result of concerted campaigns by the Rhodesian government to woo immigrants through vigorous propaganda campaigning in Europe, travel subsidies, and the provision of housing, tax relief and customs concessions, among other incentives. Immigrants were also attracted by job opportunities as the beleaguered Rhodesian economy adopted import substitution industrialisation strategies that created career openings for skilled workers in the country's expanding manufacturing sector.¹⁸

The inflow of white immigrants into the country might have been larger had successive Rhodesian governments not been very selective about the type of immigrants that they would accept. Determined to allow in only the "right type" of immigrant, by which they meant British immigrants, the government discouraged other nationalities and ethnic groups from migrating to the country. Of the 33,620 whites in Rhodesia in 1921, 32,203 were British by birth or naturalization. By 1931, British settlers accounted for 92 percent of the white population. Similarly, the majority of immigrants during the immediate post-War period were British born and nearly half migrated directly from Britain to Rhodesia.¹⁹

So determined were the Rhodesian authorities to maintain the "Britishness" of the country, that they passed the Aliens Act in 1946. The Act established a quota system under which non-British immigrants were allowed into the country at the rate of only five to ten percent of British immigrants and subject to the control of an immigrants' selection board which would maintain the "right standards."²⁰ As late as 1957, a Government Economic Advisory Council's report on immigration endorsed the long-standing policy of giving preference to immigrants from the United Kingdom "because of the importance of preserving the British way of life."²¹

Throughout the period under study, therefore, the immigration of non-British whites was kept to a minimum. Afrikaners remained generally suspect and unwelcome.²² A strong anti-Semitic undercurrent ensured that Jewish immigration was also tightly controlled, despite the fact that Rhodes himself had been very partial towards Jewish immigration.²³ Other groups such as Poles, Greeks, Italians and Spaniards fared no better.²⁴

Despite such attitudes and restrictions, the number of non-British immigrants did increase slightly in the 1930s and during World War Two. By 1946, there was a sizeable Italian population in the country. Other non-British groups that entered in the war years included Germans, Poles, Greeks, Americans, Lithuanians, Swiss, Yugoslavians, Czechoslovakians and Swedes. But collectively, they remained a small minority compared to the largely British white population in the country.²⁵ After UDI, however, the widely-ostracised and reviled Smith government was glad to accept any white people who wished to enter the country. While building the country as a British settlement remained the ideal, Afrikaners, Greeks, Italians, Portuguese and other European ethnic groups were now welcomed.²⁶

As for Indians, laws were enacted early in the century to limit their entry.²⁷ Indian immigration was repeatedly discouraged, starting with the immigration law of 1903, followed by legal restrictions in 1924 and, lastly, in 1963. Because of these measures, the Asian population never constituted more than 2 percent of the total population of the country.

The country recorded a net gain from migration of 47,121 whites, Asians and "coloureds" in the 10 years following the declaration of UDI.²⁸ By the mid 1970s, however, white emigration began to increase. For a brief period following the independence of Mozambique and Angola in 1975, there was a sudden surge of immigration when an estimated 25,000 whites fled the Portuguese territories to Rhodesia.²⁹ But the escalating guerrilla campaign and growing economic hardships as a result of tightening international economic sanctions made Rhodesia an increasingly unattractive place to live. In 1976, the country recorded a net white migration loss of 7,702, while in 1978, 13,709 whites left the country, many of them skilled professionals whose services were essential to the country's economy.³⁰ In a bid to stem the outgoing tide, the Rhodesian authorities reduced holiday allowances in September 1976 to prevent intending emigrants using them as a cover to repatriate their capital. Despite this measure, emigration continued to swell (Table 2.8).

Table 2.8: Net White Migration, 1972-1979

Year	Immigrants	Emigrants	Net Migration
1972	13,966	5,150	+ 8,816
1973	9,433	7,750	+ 1,683
1974	9,649	9,050	+ 599
1975	12,425	10,500	+ 1,925
1976	7,782	14,854	- 7,072
1977	5,730	16,638	- 10,908
1978	4,360	18,069	- 13,709
1979	3,416	12,973	- 9,557

Source: *Monthly Migration and Tourist Statistics* (Salisbury: Central Statistical Office, 1972-1979); *Annual Reports of the Commissioner of the British South African Police*, 1972-1979.

High levels of white emigration continued into the independence period. An estimated 20,534 people, mostly whites, left the country in 1981, fleeing the incoming black government. Between 1980 and 1984, net migration losses exceeded 10,000 annually despite the fact that there were many black Zimbabweans returning from exile.³¹ By 1987, there were only 110,000 whites left, approximately half of the white population in 1980.

MIGRANT LABOUR TO ZIMBABWE

Labour migrancy in Southern Africa dates back to the 1850s with the development of the sugar plantations of Natal. Thereafter, it intensified with the discovery of diamonds at Kimberley in 1870 and gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886. The uneven development of capitalism in Southern Africa, with its emerging mining and agricultural economic centres in South Africa in the nineteenth century and Zimbabwe in the twentieth, led to new forms of migration, as workers from neighbouring countries migrated in search of work. These "southernmost centres, where capital was best developed and entrenched, each in turn fed off the less developed northern periphery for part of its labour supplies."³²

Labour migrancy linked the various countries and colonies in the sub-region into one large labour market, with various countries sending and receiving migrants.³³ Sub-regional labour migration was facilitated by a number of factors including the very porous borders that made it easy for work-seekers to travel to mining centres and plantations in Zimbabwe and South Africa. In this regional migration network, Zimbabwe played a dual role as both a receiver of migrant labourers from its neighbours and as a supplier of migrant labour to South Africa. Sometimes it was used merely as a conduit by migrant labourers from Malawi and Zambia en route to South Africa who would work in Zimbabwe for a while to earn enough to finance their journey southward and then move on.

The country's expanding agricultural sector and mining industry required abundant cheap labour which, for a variety of reasons, was not available locally in sufficient quantities despite colonial efforts to coerce Africans, through taxation, to sell their labour power. Local Africans were reluctant to work on the mines and farms, partly because they were still able to produce agricultural surpluses and meet their increasing tax obligations to the colonial state. The colonial authorities resorted to coerced labour (or *chibaro*) to try to obtain the labour they required.³⁴

The general reluctance of local Africans to enter the colonial labour market led to growing reliance on foreign migrant workers. They dominated the wage labour market in the early colonial years, not just on the mines and farms, but also in the urban centres. The early colonial labour shortfall was met through the recruitment of African labour from neighbouring territories, with the main recruiting grounds being Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique. Rhodesian mine owners also experimented with recruiting Aandab, Abyssinian, Somali and Chinese migrant labour without much success.³⁵ Foreign migrant labour became increasingly important in the Rhodesian economy before 1910 (Table 2.9).

Table 2.9: Africans Employed in Mining, 1906-10

Year	Mining			Other		
	Local	Foreign	Total	Local	Foreign	Total
1906	6,345	11,359	17,704			
1907	7,673	17,937	25,610			
1908	10,368	20,563	30,931			
1909	10,689	21,948	32,637	14,518	11,425	25,943
1910	12,739	25,086	37,825	15,962	13,548	29,510

Source: *Report of the Native Affairs Committee of Enquiry, 1910-11* (Southern Rhodesia Government, 1911), para. 214.

Between 1903 and 1933, a government agency, the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau (RNLB), recruited foreign labour and supplied an average of 13,000 workers to employers each year.³⁶ Many other workers migrated on their own, outside the auspices of the RNLB and other agencies. Indeed, the majority of labour migrants probably made their own way to Zimbabwe under the so-called *selufu* (self/independent) system.³⁷ They did so through dangerous territory and at great personal risk.³⁸ By 1912, there were 10,000 Malawian workers in Zimbabwe, accounting for 35 percent of the country's entire African mine labour force of 48,000.³⁹ They were soon to displace the Tonga and Ngoni people from Zambia and workers from the Tete area of Mozambique who had, until then, been the largest group of migrant workers.⁴⁰ From 1920 onwards, Malawian migrant workers "exceeded even Southern Rhodesian Africans."⁴¹

Meanwhile, the colonial state assisted employers to secure labour by concluding labour agreements with Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi. These included the Tete Agreement of 1913 with Mozambique and the Tripartite Labour Agreement of 1937 with Malawi and Zambia. Malawian labour migration was boosted by the introduction of a free transport service for migrant workers in 1927.⁴² The Free Migrant Labour Transport Service (popularly known among Malawian migrant workers as “Ulere”) enabled workers to travel to and from Zimbabwe free of charge and provided them with free rations and accommodation.⁴³ Until the end of World War Two, Malawian immigrants were in the majority in Salisbury (Table 2.10) and the rest of the country (where they accounted for between 35 and 50 percent of all migrant workers).⁴⁴ Inner Salisbury was dominated by “foreign” Africans, as the local Shona inhabitants preferred to remain on the outskirts of the growing colonial town to produce agricultural commodities that they sold to the urban population to raise the income they that required to meet growing colonial tax demands.⁴⁵

Table 2.10: African Population by Nationality, Salisbury, 1911-1969

Origin	1911	1921	1931	1936	1941	1946	1951	1962	1969
Local	2,052 (49%)	3,346 (41%)	6,406 (49%)	9,550 (55%)	12,935 (49%)	15,810 (44%)	30,958 (41%)	154,80 (72%)	231,980 (83%)
Malawi	-	3,219 (40%)	4,637 (36%)	5,406 (31%)	7,665 (29%)	9,509 (26%)	16,399 (22%)	41,530 (19%)	28,830 (10%)
Zambia	1,155 (28%)	366 (4%)	791 (6%)	774 (4%)	935 (4%)	1,355 (4%)	2,339 (3%)	4,800 (2%)	2,770 (1%)
Mozambique	879 (21%)	1,149 (14%)	1,008 (8%)	1,612 (9%)	4,665 (18%)	9,486 (26%)	25,367 (34%)	13,350 (6%)	13,460 (5%)
South Africa & Others	70 (2%)	59 (1%)	161 (1%)	119 (1%)	161	198	425	1,260 (1%)	1,870 (1%)
Unspecified	66	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,180
Total	4,222	8,139	13,003	17,461	26,361	36,358	75,488	215,810	280,090

Source: T. Yoshikuni, *African Urban Experiences in Colonial Zimbabwe: A Social History of Harare Before 1925* (Harare: Weaver Press, 2007), p. 160.

In 1946, the government established the Rhodesia Native Labour Supply Commission (RNLSC) to recruit foreign workers for the country's farming sector. The RNLSC imported an average of 14,000 workers per year from 1946 to 1971.⁴⁶ Migrant labour inflows were further encouraged during the Central African Federation from 1953 to 1963 when Malawian migrants coming into Zimbabwe were allowed to bring their families with them. Others were allowed to settle in Zimbabwe after a stipulated period of service. An estimated 150,000 Malawians and Zambians took this opportunity to settle in the country.⁴⁷ In 1958, an estimated 123,000 Malawian men, out of a total of 169,000 then outside the country, were in Zimbabwe.⁴⁸

The number of male labour migrants from Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique continued to increase (Table 2.11). By the 1950s, they were well-represented in all sectors of the economy (Table 2.12). With the exception of commercial agriculture, there were few female migrants from these countries. Foreign workers continued to be very significant in that sector until the 1970s (Table 2.13). Of approximately 890,000 Africans employed in the economy in 1973, about 200,000 were foreign-born.⁴⁹ The majority of foreign workers continued to be Malawian, accounting for 20.2 percent of male agricultural workers in 1972. Mozambicans were next.⁵⁰

Table 2.11: Origin of African Male Employees in Zimbabwe, 1911-1951

Year	Zimbabwe	Zambia	Malawi	Mozambique	Other Territories	Total
1911	35,933	17,012	12,281	13,588	5,341	84,155
1921	52,691	31,201	44,702	17,198	1,524	147,316
1926	73,233	35,431	43,020	13,068	2,218	171,970
1931	76,184	35,542	49,487	14,896	2,983	179,092
1936	107,581	46,884	70,362	25,215	2,440	252,482
1941	131,404	48,163	71,505	45,970	2,468	299,510
1946	160,932	45,413	80,480	72,120	4,399	363,344
1951	241,683	48,514	86,287	101,618	10,353	488,455

Source: P. Scott, "Migrant Labor in Southern Rhodesia," *Geographical Review*, 44 (1), 1954, p. 31.

Table 2.12: Foreign Workers in Zimbabwe, 1956

Sector	Zambia		Malawi		Mozambique	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Mining	9,718	63	15,976	91	11,579	44
Commercial Farming	12,218	1,027	57,226	4,315	54,896	8,441
Manufacturing	5,762	154	14,694	326	13,050	201
Construction	4,478	2	10,435	12	14,870	7
Services	704	0	1,694	0	1,411	2
Commerce	1,380	17	4,567	17	3,599	7
Transport	1,801	0	3,316	13	2,517	2
Domestic Work	4,847	127	19,534	284	16,281	28
Total	40,908	1,390	127,442	5,058	118,203	8,732

Source: J. Crush, V. Williams and S. Peberdy, "Migration in Southern Africa," *Report for SAMP* (Cape Town, 2005), p.4.

Table 2.13: Foreign Workers in Commercial Agriculture, 1941-74

Year	No.	% of Total Employment
1941	56,083	-
1946	84,089	56
1951	114,878	62
1956	137,030	60
1961	135,330	50
1969	130,235	43
1970	114,693	39
1971	119,275	39
1972	120,964	36
1973	118,000	34
1974	119,000	33

Source: D. Clarke, *Agricultural and Plantation Workers in Rhodesia* (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1977), p. 31.

MIGRANT LABOUR TO SOUTH AFRICA

By 1911, the South African gold mines had become the major regional employer of migrant labour.⁵¹ Mine labour recruitment was mainly handled by the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA) in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique and the Native Recruiting Corporation (NRC) in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Zimbabwe contributed to the South African mines' labour complement, although its numbers were never as large as those of the other countries in which the WNLA and NRC operated.

Table 2.14: Contract Labour Migration to South African Mines, 1920-90

Year	Angola	Bots.	Les.	Malawi	Moz.	Swaz.	Tanz.	Zambia	Zimbabwe	Other	Total
1920	0	2,112	10,439	354	77,921	3,449	0	12	179	5,844	99,950
1925	0	2,547	14,256	136	73,210	3,999	0	4	8	14	94,234
1930	0	3,151	22,306	0	77,828	4,345	183	0	44	5	99,355
1935	0	7,505	34,788	49	62,576	6,865	109	570	27	9	112,498
1940	698	14,427	52,044	8,037	74,693	7,152	0	2,725	8,112	0	168,058
1945	8,711	10,102	36,414	4,973	78,588	5,688	1,461	27	8,301	4,732	158,967
1950	9,767	12,390	34,467	7,831	86,246	6,619	5,495	3,102	2,073	4,826	172,816
1955	8,801	14,195	36,332	12,407	99,449	6,682	8,758	3,849	162	2,299	192,934
1960	12,364	21,404	48,842	21,934	101,733	6,623	14,025	5,292	747	844	233,808
1965	11,169	23,630	54,819	38,580	89,191	5,580	404	5,898	653	2,686	232,610
1970	4,125	20,461	63,988	78,492	93,203	6,269	0	0	3	972	265,143
1975	3,431	20,291	78,114	27,904	97,216	8,391	0	0	2,485	12	220,293
1980	5	17,763	96,309	13,569	39,539	8,090	0	0	5,770	1,404	182,449
1985	1	18,079	97,639	16,849	50,126	12,365	0	0	0	4	196,068
1990	0	15,720	108,780	72	50,104	17,816	0	0	2	0	192,044

Source: J. Crush, A. Jeeves and D. Yudelman. *South Africa's Labor Empire* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), pp. 234-235.

Over time, labour migration to the mines became entrenched in parts of Zimbabwe, particularly Matabeleland and the eastern part of the country. It became almost a rite of passage for young men to go *kuWenela* (with WNLA to the South African mines)

to raise cash to meet colonial tax requirements at home and to earn money for *lobola* (bridewealth) to enable them to settle down and start their own families.⁵² So important did the *Wenela* experience and anticipated economic rewards become that young men risked their lives, walking for weeks through lion-infested country, spending nights tied to branches in trees to escape the ravages of wild animals, and braving the crocodile-infested Limpopo River, to get to the mines. As recently as the 1960s, among the Ndaus of eastern Zimbabwe, those who had spent time in South Africa were known as *Magaisa*, highly respected as men of substance, especially when they returned after many years of absence with money and valuable goods.

Similarly, in southwestern Zimbabwe, going to work in *Egoli* (Johannesburg) became a virtual rite of passage for young Ndebele men. The people of Matebeleland had always had close ties with South Africa, given the Nguni origins of the Ndebele people in that country. Moreover, the similarity of the Ndebele language of Zimbabwe with some South African languages, such as Zulu and South African Ndebele, also meant that migrants could easily blend in once they were on the mines or on the farms. However, Zimbabwean workers were still a small minority of contract labourers on the South African mines between 1920 and 1990 (Table 2.14).

Table 2.15: Foreign Black Workers Employed Legally in South Africa

Country of Origin	1975	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
Angola	623	804	69	120	68	48	44	22
Botswana	3,016	29,528	29,169	26,262	25,963	26,439	27,814	28,244
Lesotho	152,188	136,395	150,422	140,719	145,791	136,443	139,827	138,193
Malawi	39,308	31,772	30,602	27,558	29,612	29,268	30,144	31,411
Mozambique	150,738	60,490	59,391	59,323	61,218	60,407	68,665	73,186
Swaziland	16,390	11,981	13,418	13,659	16,773	16,823	22,255	21,914
Zambia	914	914	727	787	743	1,274	833	2,421
Zimbabwe	8,897	20,540	16,965	11,332	7,742	7,492	7,428	7,304
Other	8,512	3,102	995	2,512	71,105	71,072	73,998	75,430
Total	414,586	295,026	301,758	282,272	358,021	351,260	271,008	378,125

Source: E. Leistner and P. Esterhuysen, eds., *South Africa in Southern Africa: Economic Interaction* (Pretoria: African Institute of South Africa, 1988), p. 125.

Zimbabwean labour migrancy to South Africa increased considerably in the 1970s. The South African mines targeted Zimbabwean workers when supplies from the traditional source of Malawi temporarily dried up. This followed a disagreement between the South African and Malawian governments, after a plane accident in Botswana killed over 70 Malawian migrant workers. As a result, there were well over 20,000 black Zimbabweans working in South Africa's mines in the 1970s, with a peak of 37,900 in 1977.⁵³ In 1981, the independent Zimbabwean government ended the migrant labour system to South Africa's mines. However, around 7,000 Zimbabweans were still working legally in other sectors in South Africa for most of the 1980s (Table 2.15).

MIGRATION AND THE THIRTY YEAR WAR

Migration in the sub-continent was also fuelled by the region's liberation struggles that raged from the 1960s and ended with the political transition in South Africa in 1994. The wars generated a large number of refugees from the conflict countries of Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa to neighbouring states, especially Zambia, Zaire and Tanzania. Angolan refugees tended to flee to Zaire and Zambia, while South African and Zimbabwean refugees went to Zambia and Tanzania and, after the defeat of Portuguese colonialism in 1975, to Mozambique. In 1975, for example, an estimated 15,000 Zimbabwean refugees entered Mozambique.⁵⁴ By 1976, 70,000 Zimbabwean refugees had crossed the border.⁵⁵ The number rose to 150,000 by 1979.⁵⁶ Many Zimbabwean refugees also went to Tanzania and Lesotho. By 1980, approximately 1.4 million people had been displaced by the war. Of these, 228,000 were in the neighbouring countries of Mozambique (160,000), Zambia (45,000), and Botswana (23,000).⁵⁷

Following the signing of the Lancaster House Agreement in 1979, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was invited to coordinate the repatriation and resettlement of Zimbabweans who had taken refuge in neighbouring countries and to arrange the resettlement of internally displaced people who were living either in "protected villages," or in urban areas. The total number of returnees and internally-displaced persons in need of immediate assistance was estimated at 660,000. The repatriation was carried out in two phases starting in January 1980. By 31 December 1980, 72,000 refugees had been brought back into the country under this programme. At the same

time, an unknown number of refugees made their own way back from Mozambique.⁵⁸ While most refugees had been repatriated to Zimbabwe by the end of 1981, a number continued to trickle back into the country throughout the first independence decade and may have contributed to the numbers of “returning residents” (Table 2.16).

Table 2.16: Immigrants to Zimbabwe by Category, 1978-1987

Year	Returning Residents (%)	Temporary Residents (%)	New Immigrants (%)	Total (%)	Total Number
1978	35.5	6.5	58.0	100.0	4,650
1979	44.3	6.7	49.0	100.0	3,649
1980	38.4	5.9	55.7	100.0	6,407
1981	29.0	4.1	66.9	100.0	7,794
1982	19.5	2.4	78.1	100.0	7,715
1983	17.9	29.9	52.2	100.0	6,944
1984	13.0	58.5	28.5	100.0	5,567
1985	23.3	51.8	24.9	100.0	5,471
1986	22.3	37.8	39.9	100.0	4,452
1987	13.4	41.4	45.2	100.0	3,925

Source: L. Zinyama, “International Migration to and from Zimbabwe and Influence of Political Changes on Population Movements, 1965-1987” *International Migration Review* 24(4) (1990): 748-67.

The 1980s witnessed two waves of out-migration, mostly to South Africa. The first was the exodus of whites fleeing black rule.⁵⁹ The second migration wave, as yet unquantified, was the movement of thousands of Ndebele people from the southwestern part of the country into South Africa and Botswana to escape the Gukurahundi massacres of the early 1980s when the Zimbabwean government’s Korean-trained 5th Brigade brought terror to Matebeleland in its effort to put down anti-government rebels labelled by the government as “dissidents.”⁶⁰

Continuing its traditional role as both a receiver and a sender of migrants, Zimbabwe also played host to many refugees from Mozambique and South Africa during its first independence decade. Mozambican refugees were fleeing from that country’s South Africa backed fratricidal war between the ruling Party, FRELIMO, and the Mozambican

Resistance Movement (RENAMO) that broke out soon after independence in 1975. Thousands of Mozambicans sought refuge in South Africa, Malawi, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. By October 1992, when the two warring parties signed a peace agreement, an estimated 4.5 million Mozambicans had left the country as refugees and around 140,000 were in Zimbabwe. This may be an underestimate since there were probably another 100,000 unregistered refugees living outside the official camps.

CONCLUSION

Migration has clearly been an important part of the history of Zimbabwe since early times. From the arrival of the Bantu during the Iron Age, through the Mfecane/Difaqane and the subsequent period of white immigration and inward and outward labour migrancy, groups of people have moved into and out of Zimbabwe for a variety of reasons. Population movement and labour migration between Zimbabwe and its neighbours has been a constant feature of the region's history. As in the past, labour continues to migrate from one country to another in search of better opportunities. South Africa, continues to attract migrants from the rest of the region.

There are, however, some notable differences in the population flows now as compared to the past. For instance, the volume of migration is presently much higher than in the past, especially from Zimbabwe to South Africa, as political and economic problems in the home country force many people to migrate to escape hardships at home and to seek better economic conditions. Thus, what had been a trickle in the past has become a virtual flood, with many risking life and limb crossing the Limpopo River and entering the country without proper documentation in their determination to find greener pastures.

Another significant difference is the fact that, while in the past, migrants were mostly labourers seeking jobs in the region's mining and agricultural sectors, current migration includes growing numbers of highly qualified professionals, including medical doctors, engineers, academics, nurses, pharmacists and teachers, who are also leaving Zimbabwe because of unfavourable economic and other factors. Lastly, unlike the past when migrants were mostly male, women now comprise a sizeable and growing percentage of migrants, with many criss-crossing regional boundaries as cross-border traders.

Thus, there are clearly differences in the composition, numbers and types of migrants between the past and the present. What the history of Zimbabwe teaches, however, is that no movement or trend is permanent. While Zimbabwe has, in the last two decades, become a country of major out-migration, this is not its “natural” migration state. As soon as the forces propelling this unprecedented out-migration are reversed, there is every likelihood that Zimbabwe will attract back many of those who have left, becoming once again a country of both origin and destination.

NOTES

- 1 Modern names for countries in the region are used throughout the chapter, except where their use might cause confusion.
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- 3 This section of the chapter draws on A. Mlambo, *White Immigration into Rhodesia: From Occupation to Federation* (Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publishers, 2000).
- 4 A. Keppel-Jones, *Rhodes and Rhodesia: The White Conquest of Zimbabwe, 1884-1902* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1983).
- 5 R. Roberts, “The Settlers” *Rhodesiana* 29 (1979): 55-61.
- 6 B. Schutz, “European Population Patterns, Cultural Resistance and Political Change in Rhodesia” *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 7(1) (1973), p. 7.
- 7 I. Henderson, “White Populism in Southern Rhodesia” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 14(4) (1972): 387-99.
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- 10 Ibid.

- 11 Rhodesia, *Official Yearbook* (Salisbury: CSO, 1924), p. 37.
- 12 Schutz, "European Population Patterns" p. 16.
- 13 R. Palmer and I. Birch, *Zimbabwe: A Land Divided* (Oxford: Oxfam, 1992), p. 8.
- 14 Schutz, "European Population Patterns" p. 16.
- 15 Mlambo, *White Immigration*, p. 2.
- 16 Schutz, "European Population Patterns," p. 8. See also, Mlambo, *White Immigration*, pp. 8-9.
- 17 Rhodesia, *Census of Population of Zimbabwe* Pt. 1 (Salisbury: CSO, 1941), p. 5.
- 18 L. Zinyama, "International Migration to and from Zimbabwe and the Influence of Political Changes on Population Movements" *International Migration Review* 24(4) (1990): 748-67.
- 19 Schutz, "European Population Patterns" p. 17.
- 20 Ibid., p. 16.
- 21 National Archives of Zimbabwe, F170/18, Report on Immigration Policy by the Economic Advisory Council, 1957.
- 22 For Rhodesian Attitudes to Afrikaners, see R. Hodder-Williams, "Afrikaners in Rhodesia: A Partial Portrait" *African Social Research* 18 (1974): 611-42.
- 23 See M. Gelfand, ed., *Godfrey Huggins: Viscount Malvern, 1883-1971- His Life and Work* (Salisbury: Central African Journal of Medicine, n.d.), p. 39; F. Clements, *Rhodesia: The Course to Collision* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1939), p. 43; B. Kosmin, "A Comparative Historical Population Study: The Development of Southern Rhodesian Jewry, 1890-1936", Henderson Seminar Paper, No. 17, University of Zimbabwe, November, 1971; B. Kosmin, "Ethnic Groups and the Qualified Franchise in Southern Rhodesia, 1898-1922" *Rhodesian History* 8 (1977): 33-70; B. Kosmin, *Majuta: A History of the Jewish Community in Zimbabwe* (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1980).
- 24 For a discussion of Rhodesian attitudes to other non-British immigrant groups, see Mlambo, *White Immigration*, pp. 64-7.
- 25 Ibid., p. 12.
- 26 Ibid., p. 20.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Rhodesian Government, *Monthly Migration and Tourist Statistics* (Salisbury: CSO, 1972-1979); M. Sinclair, "The Brain Drain from Zimbabwe to Canada: The Issue of Compensation Payments" *Issue: Journal of Opinion* 9(4) (1979): 41-3.
- 31 Zinyama, "International Migration to and from Zimbabwe."
- 32 C. van Onselen, *Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1933* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1976), p. 120.

- 33 J. Crush, V. Williams, and S. Perbedy, "Migration in Southern Africa," Paper prepared for the Global Commission on International Migration Policy Analysis and Research Program (September 2005), p. 1.
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- 39 van Onselen, *Chibaro*, p. 122.
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- 41 F. Sanderson, "The Development of Labour Migration from Nyasaland, 1891-1914" *Journal of African History* 2 (1961): 259-71.
- 42 Clarke, *Agricultural and Plantation Workers in Rhodesia*, p. 8
- 43 Scott, "Migrant Labor in Southern Rhodesia," p. 36.
- 44 Ibid., p. 32.
- 45 T. Yoshikuni, *African Urban Experiences in Colonial Zimbabwe: A Social History of Harare before 1925* (Harare: Weaver Press, 2007), p. 162.
- 46 J. Chadya and P. Mayavo, "'The Curse of Old Age': Elderly Workers on Zimbabwe's Large-Scale Commercial Farms, with Particular Reference to 'Foreign' Farm Labourers up to 2000" *Zambezi* XIX (i) (2002): 12-26.
- 47 F. Wilson, "International Migration in Southern Africa" *International Migration Review* 10(4) (1976): 451-88.
- 48 A. Hanna, *The Story of the Rhodesias & Malawi* (London: Faber & Faber, 1960), p. 230.
- 49 Wilson, "International Migration" p. 461.
- 50 Clarke, *Agricultural and Plantation Workers in Rhodesia*, p. 32.
- 51 C. Feinstein, *An Economic History of South Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 63.
- 52 The author's own father and his three young brothers all spent time working on the mines before they started families upon their return.
- 53 Zinyama, "International Migration to and from Zimbabwe."
- 54 A. Adepoju, "The Dimension of the Refugee Problem in Africa" *African Affairs* 81(322) (1982), p 9; D. Knight, *Refugees: Africa's Challenge* (London: Christian Aid, 1978).

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- 57 Economist Intelligence Unit, *Special Report No. 111: Zimbabwe's First Five Years, Economic Prospects Following Independence* (London, EIU, 1981), pp. 15-16.
- 58 UNHCR, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (New York: United Nations, 1981).
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- 60 For a detailed account of the Gukurahundi massacres, see Catholic Commission for Peace and Justice, Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace/Legal Resources Foundation, *Breaking the Silence, Building True Peace: A Report on the Disturbances in Matebeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1998* (Harare: CCJP/LRF, 1997).

WHEN THINGS GO BAD

I'm from Gweru. A few years back I moved to work at a big hotel in Victoria Falls. I was the Head Waiter. But when things started to go bad, they cut our hours back to where my rent was higher than my pay. I quit, went back to Gweru and tried to be a cross-border trader. That was really uncertain because so many others were also doing that. Inflation kept going higher and higher and the dollar was worth less everyday. I was trying to support my wife and three kids and also my mother. Often there wasn't enough for school fees or sometimes even for food. So my wife and I decided that she would stay there with the kids and I would go to South Africa to look for work. The name "South Africa" was on everybody's lips.

I crossed at the border OK because I was on a Malawi passport, even though I have lived in Zimbabwe all my life and my family is there. I came in October of 2006, when I was 36. In Johannesburg, I stayed with a friend from school who is like a brother to me so he and his wife welcomed me to their home. They live very close to East Rand Mall so I went there to look for a job as a waiter. One place hired me but your only pay was tips. If you didn't have customers there was no pay. You could go for two to three days before you would get a customer and you would get 10% of the bill for the table you served. It was very hard because as a person from Zimbabwe, the other guys gave each other tables first and they would all have at least two tables to serve before you would get any. I only worked there for about ten days and I couldn't take it any more so I quit.

There was supposed to be a job in Grahamstown at a pizza take-out place so that is where I went next. I was hired to be a manager, but on a low

wage and told that eventually my wage would increase. I found all kinds of inefficiencies and within months I had saved the owner lots of money on fuel, wages and in ordering supplies. I started at R2,500 per month and eventually went up to R4,000 a month although if the shop was ever short of stock, he would deduct it from my wages despite all the other employees who worked there. I often worked until 3 a.m. and had to be back at work at 8 a.m. I worked 7 days a week for a year without any holidays or a chance to go and see my family. I also had to pay for any food that I ate at work and I had to pay for my cell phone, which was used for work.

I was robbed twice while trying to make a deposit at the bank. The first time, two thieves kidnapped me, stabbed my hand with a screwdriver and drove me way out of town to a remote area. They had a gun and I thought they were going to kill me. Instead, they took the money, removed the sim card from my phone, and dumped me out in the middle of nowhere. I was so lucky that a white couple picked me up and drove me to the hospital in Grahamstown. The owner was sorry, but he didn't report this to the police and instead ran it through his insurance. The second time I was robbed right outside the bank before going in.

The police arrested me and the only other Zimbabwean who worked at the pizza store. They held me for four days and nights in jail and beat me so that I suffered a broken rib. At the pizza store, the South African employees lied to the police and tried to blame myself and my friend. I had no money for rent, my accounts were in arrears and my family back home suffered. The first lawyer told me to plead guilty to a crime I didn't commit so I left him and found another lawyer through legal aid.

My former boss sent me an SMS saying I should pay him and he would drop the case. I phoned a friend in Canada and she said that was blackmail and not to do it. When we finally went to court I was found not guilty and the case was dismissed after eight months of struggling financially and emotionally. Finally I was able to get my passport from the police station and to look once again for other employment.



Chapter Three

Internal Migration in Zimbabwe: The Impact of Livelihood Destruction in Rural and Urban Areas

Deborah Potts

The people of Zimbabwe have probably experienced less than two decades of “normality” in relation to the more usual causes of migratory flows in African countries (excluding drought and war). Prior to 1980, the country was under white settler control, and the African population was subject to a vast array of institutionalized controls and constraints on their freedom of movement and settlement in urban areas. These policies were broadly designed to serve the economic and political interests of the white settlers.¹ One effect was to reduce the size of the indigenous urban population below the levels that would have occurred in the absence of such restrictions. In the 1960s, for example, the national population was growing annually at around 4 percent (in part caused by immigration), but the two main towns, Salisbury and Bulawayo, grew at only 2.3 percent and 1.7 percent. The proportion of Africans enumerated in towns in 1969 was only 14 percent. In the subsequent decade, as the war of liberation escalated, these restrictions broke down to a large extent and in-migration to towns increased significantly. Some in-migrants were refugees, not all of whom stayed once the war ended and independence was achieved.²

In the earlier decades of the twentieth century there had been extensive internal population displacement as half the country’s land was alienated by whites, leading

sometimes to immediate forced displacement of the indigenous land occupiers or their eventual removal when this suited the white farmers. Very often people were moved to already overcrowded rural areas – the so-called “native reserves” – and to areas far less agro-ecologically suited to arable agriculture.³ Prior to 1980 therefore, the experience of coerced migration away from areas of economic opportunity (as well as ancestral rights) was sadly familiar to many African households, as was the prevention of migration into areas of economic and social opportunity.

The influences on internal migration in Zimbabwe since independence in 1980 include some factors which confound the normal expectations of migration theory. These “unusual” factors have come into play mainly since 2000, when the state embarked on a programme of so-called fast-track land reform. This led to the almost immediate expropriation of the majority of the country’s large-scale commercial farms, which were still mainly white-owned.⁴ This not only caused a few thousand white owners and their families to move off the farms but also led to a much larger movement of agricultural workers whose livelihoods were disrupted or destroyed. Then, in 2005, the government embarked on a massive campaign against informal housing and employment in the towns, again destroying the livelihoods of thousands. This led to massive internal movement within the cities themselves, as dislocated people sought replacement accommodation. It also produced significant short-term out-migration from the towns by people who could find no other urban livelihood or accommodation. An important element of this out-migration was coercion by the government, which wished to displace some of the urban residents to rural areas within Zimbabwe.

INTERNAL MIGRATION IN THE 1980s

After 1980, rural-urban migration in Zimbabwe was no longer restricted and came under the same kinds of influences which have affected most other Sub-Saharan African countries since the 1960s. The most significant cause of escalating migration was the difference in economic opportunities and incomes between the towns and the “communal areas” (CAs), as the former reserves were renamed. The new government’s development programmes mirrored, in many respects, the “modernization” programmes that most newly-independent African countries embarked on in the 1960s. They encouraged urban-based economic development as well as a surge in public sector employment to

deliver a range of new services (such as health and education) to the African population. The CAs were not neglected, however. They not only enjoyed major improvements in social services but also a roll-out of government-backed agricultural services to encourage production and marketing of peasant crops.⁵ This resulted in Zimbabwe's "agricultural revolution" in the 1980s, as peasant output of marketed maize and cotton, from the more agro-ecologically suited CAs in particular, grew rapidly and soon dominated the domestic market.⁶

Rates of migration to town increased in the 1980s as many rural people moved to take advantage of higher urban incomes and better social facilities. Land shortage remained a major factor in out-migration from the CAs, as it had through the colonial period, as the government land reform programme's delivery of land purchased at market prices from the commercial sector slowed, after an initial surge facilitated by the availability of abandoned land in the early years.⁷ Squatting on such land, and encroaching on under-used commercial land, was one factor in rural-rural migration at that time and continued to be an influence into the 1990s, indicating significant land hunger.⁸

For the urban areas, independence meant much higher annual population growth rates, similar to those in other independent African countries in their first postcolonial decade. The extraordinary rates of in-migration experienced in, for example, Kenya, Nigeria or Zambia, were not replicated in Zimbabwe, however. The national annual urban growth rate from 1982-1992 was 5 percent (Table 3.1), compared to a national rate of 3.3 percent (which was boosted by immigration, particularly refugees from the war in Mozambique.) Natural increase was around 3 percent. Harare, the capital, grew at 6.2 percent; over half of its growth comprised net in-migration. In Bulawayo, the next largest town, net in-migration probably accounted for about a quarter of the growth. A number of other towns also experienced significant growth although many began from a very small base. Of those with populations of at least 20,000 in 1982, of particular note were Mutare, Masvingo, Marondera, Chinhoyi, Gweru and Chitungwiza.⁹ Other centres, such as Hwange, Zvishavane and Redcliff, did not attract many in-migrants in net terms, or may have experienced some net out-migration. By 1992, the urbanization level was about 31 percent, compared to 26 percent in 1982.

Table 3.1: Urban Population Growth Rates, 1982-2002

	Population (‘000s) 1982	AAGR* 1982-92 %	Population (‘000s) 1992	AAGR* 1992-2002 (%)	NI+ 2001-02 (%)	Population (‘000s) 2002
Zimbabwe	7,546	3.3	10,412	1.1	1.3	11,632
Total urban	1,962	5.0	3,188	2.4	a	4,030
Harare	656	6.2	1,189	1.9	2.0	1,436
Bulawayo	414	4.1	621	0.8	1.3	677
Chitungwiza	173	4.7	275	1.6	1.9	323
Mutare	70	6.5	131	2.6	2.1	170
Gweru	79	4.7	128	1.0	1.4	141
Epworth	-	-	(est) 50	8.6	2.4	114
KweKwe	48	4.6	75	2.3	1.5	94
Kadoma	45	4.1	68	1.1	1.2	76
Masvingo	31	5.3	52	2.9	1.7	69
Marondera	20	7.2	40	2.9	1.5	52
Chinhoyi	24	6.0	43	1.3	-	49
Norton	12	5.2	20	8.2	-	44
Chegutu	20	4.1	30	3.7	1.3	43
Hwange	39	0.8	42	-1.8	1.6	35
Zvishavane ^b	27	2.0	33	0.1	1.2	35
Bindura	18	1.6	21	4.9	1.6	34
Victoria Falls	8	7.8	17	6.5	2.1	32
Redcliff	22	3.2	30	0.6	1.4	32
Chiredzi	10	7.7	21	2.2	1.7	26
Ruwa	-	-	1.45	32.4	1.9	24
Kariba	12	5.8	21	1.3	1.8	24
Karoi	9	5.2	15	3.9	-	22
Beitbridge	-	-	12	6.2	-	22
Gokwe	-	-	7	9.9	-	18
Shurugwi ^b	13	2.1	16	0.6	2.5	17

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	Population (‘000s) 1982	AAGR* 1982-92 %	Population (‘000s) 1992	AAGR* 1992-2002 (%)	NI+ 2001-02 (%)	Population (‘000s) 2002
Rusape	8	4.1	12	3.5	-	17
Gwanda	5	8.2	11	1.7	1.7	13

* Annual Average Growth Rate

+ Natural Increase

a. No data available but since the averaged growth rate (2.4%) exceeds NI for nearly all of the major urban areas, evidently the urban areas experienced net in-migration when taken together.

b. Includes the population of the mining areas.

Source: Compiled from census data in 2002 national and provincial profile reports, supplemented by T. Brinkhoff, "City Population," 2007, <http://www.citypopulation.de>; AAGRs calculated from raw data.

In the rural areas, one element of internal migration was officially-sponsored movement to resettlement areas (RAs), the commercial farms bought by the government for land redistribution. By 1992, their population was about 427,000 but just over half of the national population remained in the CAs. The population of the commercial farms was then more than two and a half times that of the RAs (Table 3.2).

In retrospect, the 1980s were a halcyon period for Zimbabwe, with positive average annual per capita GDP growth, a lessening of both rural and urban poverty, and admirable progress in many social indices.¹⁰ The growth of formal, urban-based jobs did not keep pace with urban population growth, as in most of Africa, and an informal sector began to develop, albeit on a limited scale compared to most other African cities. The majority of urban in-migrant heads of household, who had moved to town since 1980, had formal sector jobs. Nonetheless, the insecurities of urban life, with virtually no welfare net for the unemployed, elderly or sick, was one reason that most rural-urban migrants eventually planned to leave town and return to the CAs, perhaps after a lifetime of urban work.¹¹ Social and cultural factors also played an important part in such decisions.

Table 3.2: Provincial Population Distribution by Land-Use Category, 1992 and 2002 ('000s)

Province		Communal lands	Small-scale commercial farms	Large-scale commercial farms	Resettle-ment areas	Urban council areas	Other urban areas	Total urban	Total Population
Manicaland	92	991	33	202	126	160	16	177	1,537
	02	975	21	146	167	216	18	234	1,569
Mashonaland Central	92	503	12	229	33	21	55	76	857
	02	616	14	189	73	47	48	94	995
Mashonaland East	92	709	27	170	51	41	15	54	1,034
	02	752	31	143	83	84	8	92	1,127
Mashonaland West	92	398	23	335	70	172	100	271	1,113
	02	429	20	276	154	265	69	334	1,225
Matabeleland North	92	471	26	20	17	59	22	81	641
	02	524	13	30	35	67	14	82	705
Matabeleland South	92	466	8	49	16	28	20	48	592
	02	499	8	32	45	46	21	67	653
Midlands	92	865	13	70	56	255	40	295	1,308
	02	948	12	73	81	326	20	346	1,464
Masvingo	92	948	27	80	58	78	18	96	1,223
	02	919	29	78	161	95	19	115	1,320
Harare	92	-	1	21	-	1,464	-	1,464	1,486
	02	-	0.6	21	-	1,873	-	1,873	1,896
Bulawayo	92	-	-	-	-	622	-	622	622
	02	-	-	-	-	677	-	677	677
Total	92	5,352	170	1,177	427	2,901	284	3,185	10,413
	02	5,661	150	987	800	3,696	218	3,914	11,632
%	92	51.4	1.6	11.3	4.1	27.9	2.7	30.6	100.0
	02	48.7	1.3	8.5	6.9	31.8	1.9	33.6	100.0

Note: Totals do not add up as growth points, administration centres, "special" and state land categories are excluded as these only account for about 1% of the population in both census years. Urban totals may not add up precisely due to rounding. Reductions in "other urban areas" will be due to redesignation of some as urban councils (thereby increasing the relative growth of urban councils).

Source: Central Statistical Office, Zimbabwe

INTERNAL MIGRATION IN THE 1990s

National factors are not the only structural conditions that influence decisions to migrate. In many ways, Zimbabwe's efforts to "modernize" according to the tenets of the development models of the 1960s were hampered by global trends in ideology and practice. In the 1980s, the majority of African countries north of Zimbabwe came under the control of the international financial institutions, which were convinced that states should withdraw from their experiments at "modernization" and allow market forces to be the main determinants of economic development. Zimbabwe's first decade of development practice flew in the face of this ideology and hampered its access to external investment and aid.¹² By the 1990s, the government had acceded to international pressure and adopted the structural adjustment policies (SAPs) that much of the rest of the continent had already experienced under the auspices of the World Bank. The outcomes were unfortunately very predictable. Urban and rural poverty increased, social indices declined, massive formal job loss occurred in towns and the informal sector expanded still further.¹³ The negative impact was felt across the country but it was worst in the urban areas.¹⁴ Incorporation into the global ideology of market liberalization thus began to change the relative economic advantages of towns versus rural areas – although both suffered.

Prices rose in towns and incomes fell in real terms in the formal sector, as well as much of the informal sector (with some important exceptions such as the used clothes trade) due to increased competition.¹⁵ Prices also rose in rural areas as the cost of agricultural inputs increased. Many households were not food self-sufficient which caused problems for them. Research on perceptions of the impact of SAPs found that urban-based migrants were well aware of the problems faced by rural dwellers, but they also emphasised that the full impact of cost rises was mitigated in rural areas by food production and the avoidance of many urban costs, such as rents for housing, energy and water charges and regular transport fares.¹⁶ Most migrants had positive attitudes towards the land reform programme and judged that the beneficiaries had generally gained materially (although they also suggested many ways in which the programme could be improved). Only 18 percent of the respondents felt that they would definitely remain permanently in Harare. This was about half the proportion in a previous survey conducted in 1985. By 2001, only 13 percent definitely planned a permanent stay. Fourteen percent expected to stay at least ten years (i.e. were long-term migrants) and for

most of the rest, there was simply a great deal of uncertainty about the prospects of any sort of urban future.¹⁷ Overall, perceptions of the security and benefits of urban livelihoods had deteriorated very sharply compared to the 1980s, which was a rational response to national economic trends.

The reduction in the rural-urban income gap in many African countries in the 1980s and 1990s, combined with deterioration in urban services, depressed urban population growth rates as net in-migration fell. Even if rates of rural out-migration were high, this was counterbalanced by a greater propensity of urban in-migrants to opt for shorter term stays, resulting in net in-migration becoming a smaller share of urban population expansion in many towns across the continent.¹⁸ Given the economic trends in Zimbabwe in the 1990s, there were good reasons to expect similar shifts there.

The magnitude and nature of internal migration between 1992 and 2002 can be deduced from the 2002 census and other sources. Before embarking on this exercise, however, it is necessary to discuss the nature of the data and some of the controversies which surround the 2002 census. A sharp political divide between the ruling party and the opposition was firmly in place by the time of this census and, given ZANU-PF's record of political violence and repression by the 2000s, it was inevitable that the opposition would be extremely suspicious of census results which can, as is well known, be manipulated to political advantage. Such advantage normally results from boosting the population in one area over another, since national resources are partly allocated on the basis of population figures.

Zimbabwe's 2002 census enumerated a population of about 11.6 million, considerably less than many had anticipated given the growth rates experienced in the previous two inter-censal periods, and the rates of natural increase extant in 1992. The inter-censal national annual growth rate was 1.1 percent (Table 3.1), a third of that in the previous inter-censal period and very low by comparison with most African countries. There were many allegations that the census had under-enumerated the population for political gain. However, there are a number of counterpoints. First, it is unclear what the government could gain by systematic under-enumeration. Selective under-enumeration of urban areas might yield some gain if the figures were used to drive down resources allocated to them, and certainly many town councils protested the census figures, including Bulawayo. However, this is fairly ubiquitous across Africa, for nearly all urban

authorities tend to project their growth from past rates, despite the fact that these have unquestionably fallen.¹⁹

Second, under-enumerating the urban population to reduce voter rolls for the disaffected urban population, who have voted against the ruling party in the last two elections, could be an effective tool, but only if there were a direct link between the two. In fact, voter rolls are based on separate registration. There was definite evidence that the government did indeed interfere in this process to boost rural versus urban voter rolls, and to hinder the registration of urban youth, their greatest critics, but this did not rest on the census figures. Indeed, in the end, the opposition used the evidence of the 2002 census – which had recorded higher urban than rural growth – to *support* its allegations of voter roll rigging.²⁰

A third counter-argument is that Zimbabwe has experienced a sharp and sustained fall in fertility, in common with some other countries to its south.²¹ By 1999, the total fertility rate was 3.96, compared to 5.4 in 1988, and further reduced slightly to 3.8 by 2005-6.²² At the same time, after a decade of declining mortality, the 1990s saw a rise in mortality, both for adults in the sexually-active age groups because of AIDS, and amongst children due mainly to reversals in the social welfare successes of the 1980s as health budgets were squeezed and household incomes declined. Demographic Health Surveys reported that in the early 1990s, under-five mortality rates were 58 deaths per 1,000 births but this rose to 102 for the five years prior to 1999, falling to 82 in 2005-6. When this situation is combined with the fact that adult mortality rates *more than tripled* between 1994 and 2005-6, with the rate of increase particularly rapid between 1994 and 1999, it becomes clear that a dramatic fall in natural increase rates in the 1990s was inevitable.²³ In fact, the NI (natural increase) rate for 2001-2, the year before the census, was just 1.3 percent, based on a crude birth rate of 30.3 and a crude death rate of 17.2, compared to 2.5 percent for the year prior to the 1992 census (Table 3.3).²⁴ These rates generally accord with what is known about national rates from other studies; they also indicate how steeply fertility fell during the 1980s and how the national population growth of 3.3 percent in that decade must have incorporated significant immigration.²⁵

The final counterpoint to allegations of serious undercounting in the census is that there was significant emigration from Zimbabwe during the 1990s and even more so in the 2000s. Much of the movement across borders has been circular in nature but there

has also been true emigration, driven by the country's economic decline and negative political factors. Zimbabwe has become a country of net out-migration, after decades of attracting immigrants from neighbouring territories.²⁶ The political significance of this emigration has, quite rightly, been publicized by the opposition. Large-scale emigration should logically also lead to an expectation that national population growth would fall, as the census recorded.

Table 3.3: Provincial Population Growth Indices, 1992-2002

Province	Population 1992 '000s	Population 2002 '000s	Crude birth rate 2001-02	Crude death rate 2001-02	Natural increase 2001-02 (%)	AAGR 1992-2002 ^c (%)
Zimbabwe	10,412	11,632	30.3	17.2	1.3	1.1
Harare ^a	1,537	1,896	30.5	10.6	2.0	2.1
Mashonaland East	1,034	1,127	29.2	21.4	0.8	0.9
Mashonaland Central	857	995	32.5	18.9	1.4	1.5
Mashonaland West	1,113	1,225	30.9	19.2	1.2	1.0
Manicaland	1,537	1,569	31.3	17.4	1.4	0.2
Masvingo	1,223	1,320	28.8	18.5	1.0	0.8
Midlands	1,308	1,464	31.3	18.6	1.3	1.1
Matabeleland North	641	705	30.2	18.4	1.2	1.0
Matabeleland South	592	653	28.4	18.9	1.0	1.0
Bulawayo ^b	622	677	27.0	13.9	1.3	0.8

a Harare province comprised three separately designated urban areas in 2002, Harare, Chitungwiza and Epworth, which essentially function as an urban conglomeration. The rural population of the province only accounts for about 1% of the population

b Bulawayo province comprises Bulawayo city; the two are synonymous.

c Average annual growth rate.

Source: compiled or calculated from data from the Central Statistical Office, Zimbabwe.

In sum then, the 2002 Census is not so seriously flawed that its results cannot be used for analysis, especially given the fact that it generally indicates *relative* changes,

geographical patterns and general rates in line with broad expectations, given what is known about trends and levels of demographic indices from other surveys and from economic and political trends. In the 1990s, therefore, urban growth rates fell across the country, with a few exceptions (Table 3.1). Harare recorded an inter-censal average growth rate of 1.9 percent per year (about a quarter of the rate in the previous ten years) and Chitungwiza, 1.6 percent. More remarkably, Bulawayo's annual rate fell to 0.8 percent from 4.1 percent in the 1980s.

The 2002 census reported the crude birth and death rates for all the towns in the year before the census. The resulting NI rates for each town are shown in Table 3.1. The rates only pertain to 2001-2, and are not valid for the entire inter-censal period. Rates would have been *higher* at the beginning of the period when death rates would have been significantly *lower* and birth rates slightly higher – thus the inter-censal average would be higher than the 2001-2 figure. On the other hand, the annual average growth rate (AAGR) smooths out the known variation over the whole ten-year period, which would have been on a downward trend, and so the rate for 2001-2 (NI plus net in- or out-migration) would have been lower than the average shown in Table 3.1. These two measures thus have a use as a crude index, comparable across the spectrum of urban areas, of the relationship between total growth and NI *at the end* of the inter-censal period.

When the NI in 2001-2 exceeded the AAGR for an urban settlement, it is likely that the settlement was experiencing net out-migration towards the end of the 1990s, and certainly by the beginning of the 2000s. This does not mean that the settlement was experiencing no in-migration, a common misunderstanding. There could still have been considerable in-migration but it was counter-balanced by a larger outflow. Where this situation pertained by 2001-2, the cells in Table 3.1 are shaded. The larger the gap between NI and the AAGR, the larger the likely flow of net out-migration. It should be noted that this measure includes emigration and is not confined to internal migration alone. The significance of this is obvious when looking at the national rates. It is known that there was significant emigration from Zimbabwe by 2002, due to the extreme economic stresses being experienced. This is indicated by the fact that NI in 2001-2 exceeded the AAGR (1.3 percent compared to 1.1 percent). The same appears to have been true for Harare, Bulawayo and Chitungwiza (the three largest towns), Gweru, Hwange, Zvishavane, Redcliff, Kariba, Shurugwi and Gwanda.

NI rates in urban areas across Africa are often as high, or higher, than those in rural areas and this was true also of Zimbabwe.²⁷ Taking all urban areas together, the growth rate was 2.4 percent per year, well above anything that can be accounted for by urban NI alone, although birth and death rate data are not available for the aggregated urban system. This means that there must have been net in-migration to the urban system from rural areas over the inter-censal period. However, the data show that this must have been skewed towards the lower end of the urban hierarchy. The proportion of the national population in urban council areas increased by 3.9 percent. Some of the seeming population growth in urban council areas must be due to the re-definition of small urban settlements (where the proportion fell), a factor which often confounds urban growth analysis.

The data suggests that relative to population size, net in-migration was strongest in some of the smaller towns such as KweKwe, Masvingo, Marondera, Chegutu, Bindura and Victoria Falls. In towns with over 100,000 people in 1992, the one that continued, in relative terms, to attract most in-migrants, was Mutare near the Mozambican border. This was probably because of the opportunities created by cross-border trading with Mozambique which became increasingly important as the 1990s wore on. Similar factors in relation to South Africa probably underpin Beitbridge's strong growth. Furthermore, with the exception of Epworth, virtually all the centres with more than 50,000 in 2002 grew at an average rate which was well under half that experienced from 1982-92. Given the parameters of migration outlined above for the 1990s, this is in line with expectations whereby *net* rural-urban migration streams have weakened considerably.

Nearly all of the provinces were experiencing net out-migration by the end of the inter-censal period (Table 3.3). Only three had a higher AAGR than NI rate in 2001-2, and in each case the difference was a mere 0.1 percent: Harare province (which essentially comprises the three urban areas of Harare city, Chitungwiza and Epworth) and Mashonaland East and Central provinces. It is possible, therefore, that even these provinces had some net out-migration by the 2000s. This would mean that none of the provinces had net in-migration from internal sources, and that the population of every province was growing at a rate less than NI, due to emigration.

In brief, the larger the gap between NI and the AAGR, the longer the period of out-migration (both internal and external). A large gap probably also indicates that emigration, rather than internal net out-migration, was more important and started earlier. This suggests that the provinces of Manicaland and Bulawayo had the strongest emigration,

particularly Manicaland where the AAGR was only 0.2 percent per year, and NI was 1.4 percent in 2001-2 (although the province also saw sharp falls in its commercial farm population). This accords with a wide range of evidence that there was much emigration from Bulawayo to South Africa and Botswana, and cross-border emigration from Manicaland to Mozambique (reversing the usual direction of flows for many decades before). The data also suggest that Matabeleland North experienced rather more out-migration than Matabeleland South, but in this case the relative size of outflows seem to have been roughly the same as in Mashonaland West, Masvingo and Midlands.

Table 3.4: Interprovincial Lifetime Migration, 2002

Province	Census population, 2002 ^a	Population/ever born in province, 2002 (%)	As % of population in 2002			
			Born and residing in province	Born elsewhere	Born in province, residing elsewhere	Net gain lifetime migration ^b
Harare	1,820,675	128	48	52	-31	22
Bulawayo	664,973	123	49	51	-32	19
Manicaland	1,602,327	89	85	15	-27	-12
Mashonaland Central	996,694	102	76	24	-22	2
Mashonaland East	1,135,201	93	70	30	-38	-8
Mashonaland West	1,214,036	107	70	30	-24	6
Matabeleland North	704,540	99	80	20	-21	-1
Matabeleland South	639,721	92	81	19	-27	-8
Midlands	1,476,644	99	75	25	-25	-1
Masvingo	1,360,825	84	86	14	-33	-19

a Figures differ slightly from census totals as they are for Zimbabwean-born population only.

b Population residing in province but born elsewhere (= lifetime in-migration) minus those born in province but living elsewhere (= lifetime out-migration).

Source: Central Statistical Office, Zimbabwe, "2002 Census," 2004.

The census also provides information on (a) inter-provincial lifetime migration, based on place of birth, compared to place of enumeration in 2002; and on (b) inter-censal interprovincial migration, based on place of residence in 1992 compared to 2002.²⁸ The two urban provinces of Harare and Bulawayo (which together contain the country's three largest urban areas, plus Epworth) have experienced significant lifetime net in-migration (Table 3.4). For Harare province the rate was +22 percent, and for Bulawayo +19 percent. For Harare, this suggests that, in relation to the Zimbabwean-born population there in 2002, just over a fifth were accounted for by the difference between people born elsewhere who had moved into Harare province since, and those born in the province who had moved out and were enumerated elsewhere. A different way of measuring this is that the 2002 population exceeded the total ever born in the province by 28 percent (i.e. it was 128 percent of the ever born).

These indices hide the sheer scale of lifetime movement in and out of these two provinces (Table 3.4). In both cases, just under half of the 2002 population was born in the province, with the other half being lifetime in-migrants. However, this has to be balanced against the fact that almost a third of those born there had moved out in both provinces. Some of this would be children born in town who have subsequently gone to live in CAs, a fairly common pattern in Zimbabwe. But it undoubtedly involves a significant amount of out-migration by other age groups. The table indicates that large-scale out-migration has also occurred in all the other provinces, equivalent to roughly a fifth to a quarter of people born, with even larger outflows for Masvingo and Mashonaland East. Inflows of people born in other provinces counterbalanced these movements to quite a large extent. Mashonaland Central and West were net gainers, and the others net losers, with particularly strong outflows from Masvingo province (-19 percent), followed by Manicaland and Matabeleland South.

As would be expected, geographical distance plays a major part in determining the source of these lifetime in-migration flows for all the provinces. Taking the urban provinces as examples, in Harare 14 percent of the 2002 population were born in Mashonaland East, 12 percent in Manicaland, and 12 percent in the other two Mashonaland provinces. Only 1.5 percent came from Bulawayo. For Bulawayo, almost 5 percent had been born in Harare but the strongest inflows were from the two Matabeleland provinces which accounted together for 26 percent of its population, followed by Midlands at 8 percent.

Inter-censal flows generally replicate the broad patterns of lifetime migration in terms of provincial net losers and gainers, the geographical sources of migration, and the fact that net migration disguises very large amounts of movement in and out of provinces in the ten years before the census (Table 3.5). The data here, taken together with all the other tabulated data so far discussed, suggest a number of things.

Table 3.5: Inter-Censal, Interprovincial Migration, 2002

Province	Census population >10 yrs, 2002 ^a	In-migrants 1992-2002/ Census population, 2002 (%)	As % of population aged >10 years in 1992			
			Resident in 1992 and 2002	In-migrants 1992-2002	Out-migrants 1992-2002	Net gain 1992-2002 migration ^b
Harare	1,397,596	34	75	38	-25	13
Bulawayo	514,524	30	75	32	-25	6
Manicaland	1,134,037	12	83	11	-17	-6
Mashonaland Central	710,018	16	85	17	-15	2
Mashonaland East	816,338	21	77	20	-23	-2
Mashonaland West	875,758	19	82	20	-18	2
Matabeleland North	494,461	12	86	12	-14	-2
Matabeleland South	449,253	14	86	14	-14	0
Midlands	1,048,659	15	82	15	-18	-3
Masvingo	972,851	11	82	10	-18	-8

a. To compare populations in 1992 and 2002 the census tables exclude those under ten years of age in 2002 as they had not been born in 1992. To retain comparability the matrices used to generate inter-censal flows also exclude the under-tens in 1992. The CSO also excluded from the 2002 population those who reported that their place of enumeration had not been their main place of usual residence during the 12 months before that census.

b. Population resident in 2002 minus the 1992 residents still there in 2002 (= inter-censal in-migration), minus difference between 1992 resident population and the 1992 residents still there in 2002 (= inter-censal out-migration).

Source: Central Statistical Office, Zimbabwe, "2002 Census," 2004.

First, Harare and Bulawayo provinces gained people from elsewhere from 1992-2000, but it is very likely that the net gain occurred in the earlier parts of this period, to be replaced by net out-migration in the last few years. In other words, in relation to the 1992 census population, roughly two-fifths of Harare's population (aged over ten years) moved in during the inter-censal period, but most of them must have come early on, while of the quarter who moved out, most probably did so towards the end of the period. This, of course, fits with economic trends, with urban circumstances becoming increasingly difficult and thus attracting fewer in-migrants by the end of the 1990s and into the 2000s, and also encouraging a larger outflow of those already there. Of Harare province's net in-migration (equivalent to about 13 percent of its population in 1992), the largest shares came from Mashonaland East and Manicaland, and the least from the Matabeleland provinces. For Bulawayo, the net internal gain was +6 percent, a balance of about 13,000 people over ten years. However, its average growth rate was so low that this was more than counterbalanced by emigration. Given the size of the Zimbabwean population in South Africa and Botswana (the most likely destinations for emigrants from Bulawayo), it is evident that such a small net internal gain would be swamped by the emigration that has occurred.

Second, most other provinces had relatively small amounts of positive or negative net migration, although in every case there was considerable movement in and out, especially in Mashonaland East and West, where a migration flow approximating a fifth of the numbers there in 2002 had moved in, and a fifth had moved out. Finally, Manicaland and Masvingo provinces had the largest net outflows to places elsewhere in Zimbabwe, as with lifetime migration patterns, but the NI data suggest that for Manicaland in particular this would have been greatly exacerbated by emigration too.

LIVELIHOOD DESTRUCTION AND INTERNAL MIGRATION

Economic decline in the 1990s, and its acceleration after 2000, caused some of the internal migration flows documented above. Thus, the shift to net out-migration from the main towns was caused by the crisis in the formal urban job market and the serious decline in urban incomes. An urban vulnerability assessment in September 2003 found that in the high-density areas where the majority of Zimbabwe's urban people live, 77 percent of households were poor. This figure included 57 percent deemed to be "very

poor,” meaning that they could not afford to buy enough food, much less anything else.²⁹ The proportion below the poverty line had roughly trebled in 12 years.³⁰ The vulnerability assessment also found that 66 percent of urban households were food insecure, compared to 64 percent in rural areas.

As a significant proportion of the urban population had come from rural areas, some still had the possible alternative of a rural livelihood. An increasing proportion of urbanites were planning or anticipating return moves to rural areas in 1994, and an even larger proportion in 2001. Circular migration has remained important in Zimbabwe, and the evidence suggests that during the 1990s, the average length of stay of individual migrants shortened, and the rate of out-migration increased. This in itself is confirmation of a sort of livelihood destruction in both rural and urban areas.

After 2000, two deliberate and disruptive government policies caused further livelihood destruction and related internal migration: the expropriation of commercial farms and Operation Murambatsvina. In 2000, the Zimbabwean government announced a policy of forced expropriation of commercial farms in the country. Historical explanations for this dramatic intervention and the nature of the programme itself have been thoroughly discussed elsewhere.³¹ The government’s stated intention was to replace the ownership and agricultural systems on most of the expropriated farms with small-scale peasant farms based largely on family labour – called A1 farms – as in the CAs and most of the RAs. The rest, so-called A2 farms, were to be transferred to black African owners, to strengthen black ownership and control of the commercial farming sector.

The impact of fast-track land reform on internal population distribution in Zimbabwe was bound to be large. By July 2003, 6.4 million hectares had been allocated to A1 and A2 farms at a ratio of about 2:1. At that point, the uptake of allocations amongst A1 peasants was reported as 97 percent, and of A2 farms as 66 percent. A further 2.8 million hectares was unallocated. About 1.2 million hectares remained as “large-scale commercial farms,” often white-owned.³²

Had there been full uptake of all the expropriated farms, had all the land been actively farmed by its new occupants (whether commercial farmers or peasant smallholders) and had the programme been supported by investment in inputs and infrastructure (as on the previous RAs), there would probably have been a net shift of the country’s population onto these farms once they were all allocated. This would have involved a

considerable amount of in- and out-migration based on the assumption that the average household size on the A1 farms would have approximated that on the RAs (around 10-11 per household), and that the new commercial farmers would have retained their labour force in order to ensure continued production.³³ The existing labour force was skewed towards the farms allocated to A2 owners, as these were more likely to be of higher agro-ecological value and more intensively farmed by their former owners, and thus had larger workforces. The black elite were able to steer the process so that A1 farms were more likely to be less naturally productive and less likely to have irrigation facilities.³⁴

The actual effect of the programme on internal population distribution was to force significant net out-migration from the commercial farms, mainly of former farmworkers.³⁵ There is evidence of out-migration in the data from the 1992 and 2002 censuses (Table 3.2). The agricultural land-use categories pertinent in 1992 were retained for the 2002 census enumeration forms, since the new categories such as A1 farms are not present in the 2002 categories. The data show that the large-scale commercial farms (LSCFs), which by 2002 would have mainly become A1 and A2 farms and unallocated land, had a net loss of population in *absolute terms* of about 190,000 people and accounted for only 8.5 percent of the total population, as against 11.3 percent in 1992. The actual loss would have been even greater as the LSCF population would have been larger in 2000 than 1992, given natural increase.

Manicaland, where there were many commercial farms on high-potential arable land, recorded the largest fall, by 2002, of 28 percent of its 1992 LSCF population, which further helps to explain its very low AAGR. The CAs recorded a relative loss from 51.4 percent of the national population to 48.7 percent. The RAs saw a significant increase from 427,000 to 800,000 people – an 87 percent increase. These figures for the RAs tally roughly with figures for the original land reform programme which show that by mid-1989 52,000 families (416,000 people) had been resettled.

The Zimbabwe Farmers' Union, citing Central Statistical Office figures, put the total number of people living in RAs by the mid-1990s at 871,000 which tallied with panel data from Kinsey's research.³⁶ However, Kinsey later found that the population in the RAs (where he had been working for nearly 20 years) had declined as the fast-track programme began. He attributed this in part to some RA household members relocating to CAs to have the chance of being listed for resettlement under the new programme.³⁷

The reduction shown in the population on small-scale commercial farms (SSCFs) in 2002 may suggest that similar out-migration happened there in 2000-2001. Both the RAs and the SSCF areas had been characterized by very large household sizes compared to CA or urban households prior to the fast-track programme. This was a reflection both of their greater labour needs as farm sizes were much larger than in the CAs, and their relatively high household incomes.³⁸

The usual starting point for estimating livelihood loss on the large-scale commercial farms is that there were about 320,000 to 350,000 farmworkers on these farms before 2000.³⁹ No data on the commercial farm workforce is contained in the published volumes of the 2002 census, perhaps not surprisingly. If we assume that there were approximately 300,000 workers in 1992, a rough average household size for commercial farmworkers would be about 3.9.⁴⁰ Assuming that there were 350,000 farmworkers in 2000, the black population on the LSCFs before the fast-track programme was roughly 1.36 million.⁴¹

There is a considerable discrepancy (of 800,000 to a million people) between this figure and those in the report for the Farm Community Trust, which estimated that farmworkers' dependants numbered between 1.8 and 2 million. The report does not explain how the dependant estimate was calculated, and it may be that it relates also to family members who were living outside the commercial farms, for example in neighbouring CAs. This would be logical. However, some have taken these figures to refer to the population actually on the LSCFs before the 2000 phase of land reform, and have assumed that they are the base number from which to calculate subsequent displacement, thereby over-inflating the numbers involved.

According to the Farm Community Trust report, by the beginning of 2003 approximately 180,000 to 200,000 farmworkers had lost their jobs. This would leave between 100,000 to 170,000 still employed, depending on the base figures used. The report itself cites 100,000 farmworkers still employed. Alternative data in another study are more comprehensive – they state that half the original 350,000 workers were part-time and casual workers, and about half were permanent.⁴² Of the latter, an estimated half (85,000) kept their jobs, often in agro-industrial and forest plantations which had not been transferred at the time of these estimates, although some subsequently were. The study also estimates that about 80,000 of the part-timers continued to work on LSCFs and some workers worked for the new farmers. In total about 90,000 farmworkers

are estimated to have completely lost their livelihoods, and "have either remained on their residential plots on the farms, or relocated to the communal areas, or formed new "informal settlements" under desperate conditions." This seems to be an underestimate, unless they are assuming that 100,000 obtained jobs with the "new farmers" in addition to those who kept their jobs. Sachikonye also points out that many who lost their jobs remained *in situ*, often in desperate circumstances; he estimated that this involved up to 50 percent of the workers. Others had to relocate.⁴³

In sum, it is very difficult to know the numbers displaced by the fast-track resettlement programme. It seems that perhaps 160,000 to 180,000 formal agricultural livelihoods were lost, although not all of these people and their dependants necessarily moved. The census data suggest a loss of over 200,000 people since 1992 on the LSCFs. Some of these would have left the country, as many of the farmworkers had connections with Mozambique where land is plentiful. Those of Malawian ancestry would have found such an option far less possible.⁴⁴

The lack of official interest or concern about the farmworkers as a political constituency was to prove dreadfully disadvantageous as the "white" commercial agricultural sector was dismantled. Without a strong political identity or voice, their claims for secure livelihoods were largely ignored. They suffered greatly from the ruling party's efforts to identify them as supporting the white commercial farmers. They further suffered from being identified as "other" (such as Malawian or Mozambican) by black Zimbabweans, due to the legacy of the foreign element in the commercial farm labour force. This was used as a justification for excluding them from the land reform process. It is of little use to the excluded farmworkers that these "justifications" are easily challenged. For example, the 1990s saw a major farmworker strike against their employers for better wages. Also, by far the majority of farmworkers were locally born by 2000, whatever the nationality of their parents or grandparents.⁴⁵

Many who were forced to move had the possibility of going to CAs and attempting to gain access to land there through their kinship links. However, given the shortage of land in the CAs – one of the driving forces of Zimbabwean land reform – this "option" would not necessarily have been an easy one, even for those with clear land rights. For those deemed "aliens," this option was even more difficult. However, there has been much conceptual blurring in the figures about "aliens" on the farms. Despite the evidence that the foreign-born component of the farmworkers must have been very small by

2000, the General Agriculture and Plantation Workers' Union of Zimbabwe estimated that they still comprised 30 percent of all farmworkers.⁴⁶ The inconsistency arises from counting many born in Zimbabwe, with some element of foreign ancestry, as "aliens" or, even more confusingly, as "migrants." As Sachikonye notes, most so-called migrant workers are actually "second or third-generation descendants of the migrants imported during the first half of the 20th century." In his 2002 study, he found that the proportion of "migrants" among farmworkers was 29 percent.⁴⁷

The use of the term "migrant" to identify farmworkers without Zimbabwean nationality is conceptually unhelpful and has done them no favours. Conceptually, "foreign migrant" might make more sense. But most of these so-called migrants were born on the farms that they were working on – it would hard to be *less* of a migrant worker than that. To deem as "alien" people born in Zimbabwe serves only to obscure. The survey for the Farm Community Trust found that 12 percent of the "migrants" had forebears from Malawi and 12 percent from Mozambique (most of the rest had either Zambian or Batswana ancestry).⁴⁸ However there is no indication of the degree of such ancestry – for example, was one Malawian grandparent enough to deem a worker "foreign?" Is there any point in referring to someone born in Zimbabwe, whose parents were both born in Zimbabwe, as foreign? The one certain thing is that the proportion of the agricultural workforce who were foreign in the usually accepted sense must have been rather small by 2000, and very much less than 25-30 percent. Most would have been elderly (and thus particularly vulnerable).

In sum, there has been some confusion about the scale of the geographical displacement of Zimbabwe's farmworkers. However, it is clear that it was very significant. Research on the farmworkers' predicament and their current situation has focussed on those still on the farms because of the difficulty of tracing where displaced workers have gone. The census is of no help as it is impossible to disaggregate whether they have been absorbed into the CAs, the urban areas, or the old RAs. A number of informal settlements were reported to have grown up in various locations throughout the country, including at Macheke, Concession, Chihwiti and Gambuli and near Rusape in Manicaland, Mhangura in Mashonaland West, Nyamandlovu in Matabeleland North and Esigodini in Matabeleland South.⁴⁹ However, farmworkers were not always the main originators of these settlements. In some cases, a lack of urban housing and jobs pushed urban residents into such settlements.

Some hints on farmworker destinations can be found in the Farm Community Trust survey which asked retrenched workers still on the farms about their intentions. The majority hoped to remain on the farms; most of the rest said they might go to CAs or other commercial farms. Very few thought they might go to RAs (3 percent). Only 3 percent were apparently thinking of non-rural options within Zimbabwe or beyond. Of course, no one is likely to "plan" to go to a squatter camp so there was bound to be a mismatch between the plans of those surveyed on the farms (and thus, by definition, not precipitately displaced) and the actual outcomes for those forced to move without time to plan. It appears that those physically displaced were distributed, therefore, between different types of destinations. In every case, however, the migration was forced and the livelihood outcome highly disadvantageous.

The second major government intervention which had a dramatic impact on urban livelihoods was Operation Murambatsvina (Restore Order/Clear Out the Trash). In 2005, this drastic campaign was launched against all forms of informality in urban Zimbabwe, especially embracing housing and informal jobs. In July, a UN report estimated that around 650,000 to 700,000 people had lost either the basis of their livelihoods or their homes, or both.⁵⁰ This figure was based on the government's own estimates and average household size, plus information gathered from a variety of different organisations and individuals within the country. The government recorded that 92,460 dwelling units had been razed, leading to around 570,000 people, or 133,534 households, losing their homes; a further 98,000 were reported to have lost their informal sector livelihoods. The official data indicated that, in relation to their share of Zimbabwe's total urban population, the towns worst affected by housing destruction were those in Manicaland (primarily Mutare), Matabeleland North (primarily Victoria Falls) and Mashonaland West.

No regional or ethnic factors were clearly discernible in Operation Musambatsvina – the impact was concentrated in those towns where "unplanned" housing of various sorts was most common. Household occupancy rates within such dwellings then determined how many families were caught up in the "tsunami," as locals swiftly nicknamed the campaign. Neither Harare nor Bulawayo was disproportionately affected. Indeed, according to government data, the reverse was true and Bulawayo was (relatively) least affected of all. Official bias may have affected these figures although, at first, the government did not seem to feel it necessary to hide the details of the campaign. Also,

Bulawayo had, for various reasons, a lower proportion of informal housing than many other towns.⁵¹ The particularly strong impact in Mutare and Victoria Falls can be related to the fact that both had strong in-migration relative to much of the urban hierarchy in the 1990s, encouraging the establishment of informal housing despite the government's strong antipathy.

The possible motives for this terrible campaign involved a lethal mixture of vindictive electoral politics, a particularly strong attachment to planned environments, and a wish to reduce the urban population for political and economic reasons.⁵² A major objective was to forcibly displace, to rural areas, those urban people whose houses were demolished – potentially over half a million people. Had this succeeded, the impact on internal migration would have been massive, apart from the flagrant breaches of human rights involved. In reality, the eventual displacement after about a year was much smaller. There was, and still is, serious displacement within the urban areas themselves for, in the end, most of those whose houses were demolished relocated within the towns, causing incredible overcrowding in formal, planned houses which were often already crowded.

The government argued that all "true" Zimbabweans had rural "homes" so the displaced could, and should, go to these homes. There certainly are strong rural-urban connections in Zimbabwe and a significant and increasing proportion of recent immigrants anticipate exercising rural livelihood options in the mid- to short-term future. Unfortunately, these connections were being misused and deliberately exaggerated by the government for its own ends. An increasing share of all urban populations did not have an active rural connection (for example, many of the urban-born). Salient gender and foreign descent issues also prevailed against viable, economic links in rural areas for many urban dwellers.

A blanket assumption that all urban dwellers could pick up some sort of rural livelihood is nonsensical.⁵³ Women's claims to land in the CAs in their own right are far weaker than men's in Zimbabwe and many divorced, widowed or separated women migrate to town because they have been squeezed off the land and their social links in rural areas have become dysfunctional. Foreign descent is also likely to preclude local rural linkages, for obvious reasons. As discussed, many farmworkers in this category were forced out of the LSCFs by the fast-track land programme. Some ended up in and around towns and, already marginalized in Zimbabwean society, were more likely to

live in the peri-urban communities and informal housing stock that were the very targets of Operation Murambatsvina. If people in these groups were forced into rural areas during the campaign, it is inevitable that they would have had to return to town as their livelihood options there would have generally been non-existent.

The campaign did displace some people "voluntarily" to rural areas inasmuch as they were not forcibly rounded up and bused there, as many were. Some were assisted by NGOs and churches on a humanitarian basis, despite uneasiness about seemingly carrying out the government's dirty work. In Victoria Falls, for example, 4,000 people, equivalent to one in eight of the 2002 population, were returned on a voluntary basis by churches.⁵⁴ Surveys showed that some out-migrants left Zimbabwe altogether, primarily to be able to earn remittances to support their households in the country.⁵⁵

The precise numbers who moved out of the towns because of the campaign, will never be known. Some surveys suggested significant displacement in the immediate aftermath. In Harare's high-density areas, one survey estimated that 40 percent of respondents had family units disrupted by the campaign, mainly because a wife and/or children had gone to rural areas.⁵⁶ A later survey of Harare, Bulawayo and Mutare found essentially the same pattern, although in this case it was reported that some of them had gone to other suburbs.⁵⁷ Such surveys miss households who left in their entirety, however, so this would underestimate the impact. Human Rights Watch estimated in September 2005 that, of the 700,000 or so estimated to have been displaced, 114,000 (20 percent) had gone to rural areas.⁵⁸

Operation Murambatsvina was a massive disruption for the urban population even if the majority stayed in town. Later reports and surveys often found that many who were either forced out, or went "voluntarily" to rural areas, subsequently returned. One survey in Bulawayo found that only 2 percent of entire households from demolished houses had moved to a rural area while another 4 percent had moved but left their breadwinner in Bulawayo. Overall, this survey calculated that a maximum of 17 percent, and a minimum of 6 percent, of displaced households went to rural areas. Of the rest, a few individuals went to other towns or to South Africa or Botswana, but the vast majority of the internally-displaced remained in Bulawayo. Thirty-eight percent remained on the stand where their backyard structure had been demolished, and 38 percent went to another stand. Other surveys in certain areas of Bulawayo and Victoria Falls found that 19 percent of those displaced from urban to rural areas were still there, but 75 percent were known to have

returned to town. Very few of those displaced had been able to devise an alternative livelihood in a rural area and this was the primary reason for their urban return.⁵⁹

Research in 2006 amongst those made homeless in Harare found much evidence of urban-rural migration caused by the campaign, although none of the informants in agencies or among those affected could estimate the numbers.⁶⁰ There was some evidence that those deemed, even by government, to have no rural links, such as those of foreign descent or urban-born, were taken to long-term holding camps such as Hopley Farm on Harare's outskirts. One form of urban-rural movement noted was people moving from Harare not to distant rural "homes," but to the CAs nearest to the city.

The issue of rural kinship links and assets for an alternative livelihood are of little relevance to this sort of out-migration, as the aim was to maintain physical access to the city and urban livelihoods via commuting. Purchasing a plot to build a house, thereby avoiding the planning restrictions of a residence within city boundaries, is often possible in such areas, despite land purchase being at odds with indigenous tenure. The very rapid inter-censal growth rates of towns like Ruwa and Norton (Table 3.1), which are within commuting distances of Harare but have far more space and easier access to housing, are further evidence of these patterns being driven by lack of official housing in Harare. The expansion of Epworth, a large unplanned settlement on the outskirts of Harare, which grew up in the 1970s and 1980s on missionary land, is also associated with this phenomenon, although parts of it suffered under Operation Murambatsvina.

CONCLUSION

Since independence, internal migration patterns in Zimbabwe have undergone massive shifts. In the 1980s, they broadly conformed to expected patterns, with people moving from rural to urban areas (albeit with much mid- to long-term circulation) in response to economic opportunities. These patterns began to shift in the 1990s after ESAPs were introduced and urban employment and incomes were negatively affected. Lower net in-migration to towns resulted but migration patterns were still the result of choice, although those choices were obviously strongly determined by global economic influences.

By the end of the 1990s, people's perceptions of relative economic opportunities were leading not only to altered internal migration but also to emigration, which greatly

accelerated in the 2000s. However, after 2000, government policies forced two further kinds of migration, both of which conflict with the expectation that migrants usually move to places of relative economic advantage. Significant numbers moved away from former jobs in the commercial farming sector as that sector was profoundly disrupted by fast-track land reform. And hundreds of thousands were displaced within the cities by Operation Murambatsvina. Many were forced into rural areas in the short-term, but since they could not survive there, they subsequently returned to the towns. The general economic decline in Zimbabwe has caused immense suffering, but these two sudden policies, which made hundreds of thousands move against their wishes, are sadly distinctive in the amount of human misery they have generated.

NOTES

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- 6 M. Rukuni and C. Eicher, eds., *Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution* (Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1994).

- 7 Alexander, *Unsettled Land*; Moyo and Yeros, "Land Occupations and Land Reform"; B. Kinsey, "Land Reform, Growth and Equity: Emerging Evidence from Zimbabwe's Resettlement Programme" *Journal of Southern African Studies* 25(2) (1999): 173-96.
- 8 L. Sachikonye, "The Situation of Commercial Farmworkers after Land Reform in Zimbabwe" Report for the Farm Community Trust of Zimbabwe, Harare, 2003; Moyo and Yeros, "Land Occupations and Land Reform"; Alexander, *Unsettled Land*.
- 9 Chitungwiza is Harare's dormitory satellite town built, according to the segregationist auspices of the Rhodesian state, 26 kms from Harare itself, but functionally part of that city.
- 10 Stoneman, *Zimbabwe's Prospects*; D. Auret, *A Decade of Development: Zimbabwe, 1980-90* (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1990); D. Potts, "Urban Unemployment and Migrants in Africa: Evidence from Harare, 1985-94" *Development and Change* 31(4) (2000): 879-910.
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- 19 See Potts, "Urban Growth and Urban Economies" for further discussion of these points in general for African towns.
- 20 Human Rights Watch, "Not a Level Playing Field: Zimbabwe's Parliamentary Elections in 2005" Briefing Paper, New York, 2005, noted, for example, that the 2004 current voters' roll for Harare had 832,000 names compared to 879,000 in 2002. The opposition leader said that recorded voter roll declines in the urban areas and increases in the rural areas were not supported by the 2002 census and called for an independent audit of the roll. The use of census data by the opposition is, unfortunately, often demonstrably mistaken, however. For example, this same report noted that the MDC claimed that the 2002 census showed that first, Harare's potential voters had increased by 500,000, or 30 percent, and second, that more than 50 percent of the total population was under fifteen years. In fact, the total increase in the population in Harare in this period was 247,000 and a significant proportion of these would have been under voter age; and the census showed that 40 percent were under fifteen years.
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- 22 Central Statistical Office and Macro International Inc., *Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey 1999* (Harare: Central Statistical Office; Macro International, Maryland, 2000); Central Statistical Office and Macro International, *Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey 2005-2006*.
- 23 The DHS surveys showed that the female adult death rate for 15-49 year olds increased from 3.34 per thousand in 1994, to 9.14 in 1999, to 12.66 in 2005-06. The male equivalents were 4.17, 11.35 and 13.3.
- 24 Central Statistical Office and Macro International Inc., *Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey 1999*.
- 25 The DHS surveys show that the crude birth rate recorded in the three years before the 2005-05 DHS was 31.0, and was around 34.5 in 1992 and 30.8 in 1999.
- 26 Using the known NI rates at the beginning and end of the census period, it is possible to calculate a very crude estimate of net emigration. For example, the 1992 population should first

be deflated by the number of Mozambican refugees in camps in that year (120,000), who are known to have returned in the next few years. If the decline in natural increase is then assumed to have been weighted towards the first five years of the inter-censal period (in accordance with known trends) so that two-thirds of the decline occurred then, averaged out over the years, with the rest averaged out over the last five years. And if it is then assumed that emigration equalled about half a million, spaced out over the ten years, this yields a population in 2002 very close to that enumerated. Such calculations have to be treated with caution, as they take no account of the age-sex profile of emigrants, amongst many other complex demographic variables. Nonetheless, they do help to make sense of the census data, and also show that the wilder estimates of emigration by 2002 of some millions must have been incorrect.

- 27 That African urban NI rates, as in Zimbabwe, are often higher than rural ones, despite towns having lower fertility rates, seems surprising. It occurs because their age profiles are skewed towards those in their fertile years, due to selective in-migration, making their crude birth rates (births per thousand of the population) very similar to rural rates, and because their death rates are often very significantly lower than rural rates; see Potts, "Urban Growth and Urban Economies."
- 28 Various indices compiled and calculated from census tables are shown in Tables 3.4 and 3.5. The figures for the population in 2002 needed to calculate these indices necessarily differ from those in Table 3.3 (as explained in the tables' notes).
- 29 Zimbabwe National Vulnerability Assessment Committee (in collaboration with the SADC FANR Vulnerability Assessment Committee), *Zimbabwe: Urban Areas Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment*, September 2003 (Harare, Urban Report no. 1, 2004).
- 30 Potts, "'All My Hopes and Dreams are Shattered'"; D. Potts, "'Restoring Order?' The Interrelationships Between Operation Murambatsvina in Zimbabwe and Urban Poverty, Informal Housing and Employment" *Journal of Southern African Studies* 32(2) (2006): 273-91.
- 31 For example, Alexander, *Unsettled Land*; Moyo and Yeros, "Land Occupations and Land Reform."
- 32 Moyo and Yeros, "Land Occupations and Land Reform."
- 33 Kinsey, "Land Reform, Growth and Equity."
- 34 Moyo and Yeros, "Land Occupations and Land Reform."
- 35 Sachikonye, "Situation of Commercial Farmworkers"
- 36 Kinsey, "Land Reform, Growth and Equity"; D. Potts, "Environmental Myths and Narratives: Case Studies from Zimbabwe" In P. Stott and S. Sullivan, eds., *Political Ecology: Science, Myth and Power* (London: Edward Arnold, 2000), pp. 45-65.
- 37 B. Kinsey, Paper presented at Britain-Zimbabwe Society Annual Research Meeting, Oxford, July 2006.

- 38 Kinsey, "Land Reform, Growth and Equity."
- 39 Sachikonye, "Situation of Commercial Farmworkers."
- 40 The calculation uses the 1992 census figure for the LSCF population of 1,177,000 adjusted for the size of the white farming population.
- 41 The figure of 350,000 is from Sachikonye, "Situation of Commercial Farmworkers."
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LEAVING FOR HEALTH REASONS

From the time I started working as a doctor to the time I left Zimbabwe things were going down in terms of medicine supply, in terms of other health care professionals leaving and so forth. I graduated in 2000 and by 2004 I had left Zimbabwe. There were really serious shortages, people resigning, people going, people leaving. It was kind of fashionable to leave at that time and so I left. I started doing locums in Botswana in 2003. Then I moved to Swaziland in 2004. I only worked for about four months there. I applied to do a masters degree at Wits University and came here in 2005. I completed the degree in 2006. I then did another one in tropical medicine in 2007. At the end of 2007 I registered for my PhD, which I am doing now. I actually applied for the place when I was still in Zimbabwe.

When I started I was a student, I was studying part-time and I did not have a scholarship. I was paying my own fees. I would try to find a part-time job and also balance that with my schoolwork. So at first it was tough. Then I said to myself, I am more intelligent than these guys, let me do something else different. So I enrolled for an MBA (Masters in Business Administration) whilst I was actually doing my Masters in Public Health.

Later I became the HIV and AIDS programme manager for an NGO, without having any management experience whatsoever. But that MBA training helped me, even though I haven't completed the degree yet. From there things began to move more smoothly. Some people even head hunted me after they heard me speak at a workshop. Recently, I have been working in a medical university. I left there last week and I started a new job this week.

Anyone who migrates without a job and without support finds it tough. But you need to work hard and actually the experience has turned out good for me because it makes you more clever, it makes you realise opportunities, it makes you very creative and things like that. I am really satisfied with what I have achieved. And financially, you know I would not have been able to buy a house here and there, to support my parents and to buy cattle if I was still in Zimbabwe. Unless I was doing some of those crooked deals!

I have managed to buy those things just because I am in South Africa. I send money regularly to Zimbabwe. It's used for everything that you can think of. Paying school fees, buying food and so on. The amount of money that I send depends on need. For instance, next month September is a month for school fees. So I have to send more. My sisters are here too. So we all send money home. I might consider going back to Zimbabwe sometime in the future. I am in the Zimbabwe Doctors for Human Rights. We get lecturers from South Africa to help with teaching in Zimbabwe since there is no one left there to teach.



Chapter Four

Discontent and Departure: Attitudes of Skilled Zimbabweans Towards Emigration

Daniel Tevera and Jonathan Crush

Whether the brain drain is a “curse or boon,” and for whom, is the subject of considerable international debate.¹ Many African governments and scholars argue that the West is actively “poaching” scarce skills without regard to the dire development consequences for countries of origin. One commentator, for example, maintains that the main pressures for the brain drain come from countries of origin, not destination: “Europe, for economic and demographic imperatives, needs immigrants to make up for the demographic deficit occasioned by an ageing population. Rich countries need two categories of immigrants to cope with prevailing economic and demographic imperatives: one set to do poorly paid, dirty, and dangerous jobs which nationals scorn; and highly specialised professionals, especially software specialists, engineers, doctors and nurses, in short supply.”²

A contrary line of thinking tends to blame the developing world for its own misfortune. In other words, there would be no brain drain if conditions at home were more conducive for skilled people to stay: “If we think of the world as no more than a set of countries which own their population, then this does look like theft by the developed countries. But that would be a foolish way to see it. The loss of skilled and professional

workers on this scale is as much a vote of no confidence in the government concerned as a flight of capital. It becomes more like a flight of refugees, a flight from spectacular misgovernment, from appalling working conditions and pay levels so low that they are below subsistence. The remedy is not to end the right to work in developed countries but to make an environment at home in which people want to stay and work.”³

Contemporary Zimbabwe would probably be viewed by most as falling squarely in the latter camp. The brain drain of professionals was negligible in the first decade of independence (except of course for those white professionals who headed south across the Limpopo into apartheid South Africa). Indeed, many black professionals who had left Zimbabwe in the Smith years returned after 1980.⁴ The strictures of the structural adjustment policies (SAP) of the 1990s marked something of a turning point, however.⁵ For over a decade now, Zimbabwe has been experiencing a debilitating flight of professional and skilled people. This “brain drain” has now escalated to such a level that it has serious implications for future economic growth and development.⁶ Tens of thousands of Zimbabwean doctors, nurses, pharmacists, teachers and other professionals have left the country to secure jobs in Britain and in neighbouring countries such as South Africa, Botswana, Swaziland and Namibia.⁷ Most seriously affected is the health sector where, according to one estimate, 60 percent of state-registered nurses and about half of the medical doctors have left the country since 1999.⁸

Against this backdrop, it is important to understand exactly what Zimbabwean professionals think about their country, their prospects and the future. Is the grass so green overseas that they would leave regardless of what was happening at home? Or have conditions at home become so difficult or unpalatable that departure for anywhere is the only realistic option? The Southern African Migration Programme (SAMP) has conducted two attitudinal surveys in Zimbabwe to better understand the reasons why so many professionals are leaving and what would be needed to stem the outflow. The first survey was conducted in 2001, just as the outflow of skilled migrants began to intensify. A sample of 738 working professionals from a variety of sectors was interviewed at length in the three cities of Harare, Bulawayo and Gweru. In 2005, SAMP interviewed a sample of 900 final-year students in colleges and universities in Harare, Bulawayo, Mutare, Kadoma, Marondera, Rusape and Masvingo. Both surveys showed extraordinary dissatisfaction with social and economic conditions in Zimbabwe and levels of emigration potential that were significantly higher than in any other country surveyed.

THE POTENTIAL EMIGRANT POOL

This chapter defines a "skilled" Zimbabwean as someone who: (a) is a Zimbabwean citizen; (b) is 16 years of age or older; (c) has completed high school and possesses a diploma or degree from a recognized college or university (or is in the final year of studying for a diploma or degree) and (d) is currently economically active (employed or looking for employment). In addition, some high school leavers occupying accounting, managerial and clerical positions are included because of their experience.

The respondents in the SAMP survey of professionals were drawn from a wide range of professions including engineering, finance, health, law, police/military and education (Table 4.1). The services industry and banking/finance together made up almost 50 percent of the sample. A large proportion of the respondents in the service industry were engaged in retail as well as transport and communication. Another 16 percent were employed in the education/research field and 14 percent in a professional practice such as medicine, law, engineering and information technology. Other employers included heavy industry, government, the military and agriculture.

The majority of the respondents (59 percent) were from Harare, which accounts for nearly half of the urban population of Zimbabwe (Table 4.2). Ninety-four percent of the respondents were black or of African origin, 2 percent were white, 3 percent coloured and 1 percent of Indian or Asian origin. This distribution closely approximates the national population breakdown. However, the actual numbers of whites and Indian/Asians interviewed were too small to make general statements about the attitudes and emigration intentions of these groups of Zimbabweans.

The surveyed population was highly qualified: 46 percent had certificates or diplomas, 25 percent bachelors' degrees, 5 percent masters' degrees and 0.4 percent doctorates. Twenty-four percent had only gone as far as high school but the majority of these had been employed for extended periods and received in-house training, becoming "skilled" through experience. The majority of the sample (74 percent) had full-time jobs. Only 4 percent were unemployed.

Table 4.1: Employment Sectors of Professionals

	No.	%
Service industry	221	24.5
Finance/Banking	203	22.6
Education/Research	142	15.8
Professional practice	127	14.1
Police/Military	97	10.8
Heavy industry	97	10.8
Retail	93	10.3
Government	88	9.8
Accounting	75	8.3
Other services	60	6.7
Tertiary education	57	6.3
Medical	55	6.1
Banking	51	5.7
Manufacturing	46	5.1
Engineering	46	5.1
Finance	41	4.6
Secondary education	39	4.3
Insurance	36	4.0
Research	25	2.8
Transport and communication	23	2.6
Primary education	21	2.3
Construction	20	2.2
Food	17	1.9
Automotive	17	1.9
Law firm	16	1.8
Real estate	15	1.7
Agriculture	13	1.4
Mining	10	1.1
Private security	10	1.1
Information technology	10	1.1
Textile	4	0.4
Energy	3	0.3

Note: Respondents could give more than one answer.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Professionals' Race and Residence

	Race				Total	
	Black	White	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	No.	%
Harare	502	9	14	4	529	58.8
Bulawayo	217	12	11	3	243	27.0
Mutare/ Rusape	61		-	-	61	6.8
Kadoma	25	1	-	-	26	2.9
Marondera	16	-	2	-	18	2.0
Masvingo	23		-	-	23	2.6
Total	844	22	27	7	900	100

Percentages may not add up to 100 in this and subsequent tables due to rounding.

Of the 900 respondents, 66 percent were male and 34 percent were female. The uneven gender distribution reflects the fact that males have generally had greater access to the educational system and the higher end of the labour market than females. This is slowly changing but is still very evident in the gender profile of the educated class. The survey also suggested that the skills base of Zimbabwe is quite youthful with 79 percent of the respondents aged below 35 years (Table 4.3) and only 3 percent over 50. This is a reflection of another legacy – the colonial system which provided limited opportunities for the black population.

Table 4.3: Age and Sex of Professionals

Age	Sex		Total	
	Male	Female	No.	%
15-24	136	126	262	29.1
25-34	313	132	445	49.4
35-49	122	45	167	18.6
50-59	18	5	23	2.6
Above 60	3	-	3	0.3
Total	592	308	900	100

Fifty percent of the respondents were married, 44 percent single, 2 percent divorced, 1 percent separated, and 2 percent cohabiting. The relatively high number of respondents who are not married can be attributed to the generally youthful nature of the Zimbabwean skills base. Forty-two percent of the respondents were household heads, 21 percent were children of household heads and 17 percent spouses of household heads. In addition, 46 percent of the respondents had no children, 21 percent had only one child and 17 percent had two children. Almost a quarter of the respondents (24 percent) had no economic dependants, while 56 percent of the respondents had between one and four dependants. In other words, at the time of the survey, Zimbabwe's remaining black professionals were generally quite young and not encumbered by long professional or career service or family commitments. With their best working years still before them, these young professionals, like those anywhere, were inherently likely to be more mobile than their older and more established counterparts.

While this group of skilled people generally earned higher salaries than the rest of the working population, they were still not particularly well-off. At the time of the survey, about 22 percent still earned less than Z\$11,000 a month. A further 18 percent earned between Z\$11,000 and Z\$17,000, while only 23 percent earned above Z\$41,000. At the time, the poverty datum line was pegged at Z\$17,000 (about US\$312) for a family of six.⁹

The student survey was part of a broader regional SAMP initiative known as the Potential Skills Base Survey (PSBS).¹⁰ In Zimbabwe, the PSBS focused on the attitudes of final-year students from universities and colleges. The university students were from the faculties of Law, Science, Engineering, Commerce, Medicine/Pharmacy and Arts & Humanities. The colleges included technical, commercial and teacher training institutions located in several urban centres. Almost all the students were registered full-time with very few studying on a part-time basis. Just over half were registered for undergraduate degrees, while 40 percent were studying for certificates/diplomas at the various polytechnics and training colleges. A few students were studying for postgraduate degrees (5 percent).

The gender breakdown of the sample was predominantly male (62 percent), reflecting ongoing gender inequality in access to higher education and the professions. Over half of the students were below the age of 24. Just over a third had their homes in the rural areas (33 percent in rural communal areas and 2 percent in commercial farming

areas). The other two-thirds were from urban areas, especially the large towns and cities (47 percent). The majority of the students (76 percent) were single, 18 percent were married, 3 percent previously married but now single, and only 3 percent cohabiting. In contrast to professionals, very few students had dependants; as many as 63 percent had none at all.

Table 4.4: Demographic Profile of Students

	No.	%
Sex		
Male	747	62.4
Female	451	37.6
Age		
23 years or less	699	58.8
24 years and more	490	41.2
Race		
Black	1,154	96.7
White	10	0.9
Coloured	28	2.3
Asian/Indian	2	0.2
Location of home		
Rural communal area	388	32.5
Commercial farming area	26	2.2
Small town	216	18.1
Large town/city	564	47.2
Marital status		
Married	216	18.0
Separated/divorced/abandoned/ widowed	35	2.9
Cohabiting	36	3.0
Single	910	76.1

In sum, the students of Zimbabwe proved to be even more footloose than their young professional counterparts. This kind of profile is not unusual for the student body in any country. However, being relatively unencumbered does not necessarily mean that the first thing students think about is leaving home. Indeed, in most countries students are anxious to get a foothold in the local labour market and begin their careers, not look to leave at the earliest opportunity. The PSBS showed quite clearly that students in most SADC countries do not think this way. They feel that their chances of a satisfying life and professional career are greater if they do leave. However, the intensity of the desire, and the likelihood of leaving, set Zimbabwean students apart from their colleagues in other SADC countries.

PREDICTING SKILLS EMIGRATION

Emigration potential is a measurement of the likelihood of the skilled population leaving a country. Various parameters can be used to predict the emigration potential of skilled Zimbabweans, such as the extent to which they have considered emigrating from the country, the factors affecting their decision to move, their most likely destinations and the perceived length of stay in their most likely destination.

Both surveys indicated that the vast majority of actual and future skilled Zimbabweans had thought about emigrating. Fifty-seven percent of the professional respondents had given the possibility a great deal of consideration while 29 percent had given it some consideration. Only 13 percent had never considered emigration. An even higher proportion of students (71 percent) indicated that they had given emigration a great deal of consideration. A mere 6 percent of the students had not considered leaving at all. Gender, age and socioeconomic status made little difference to the students' answers.

Amongst the professionals, these variables did make a difference. The survey showed that a greater proportion of female than male professionals (62 percent versus 54 percent) had seriously considered emigrating. The skilled population aged between 25 and 35 years had given the most consideration to leaving the country. There was a general increase with age in the proportion who had not considered leaving the country: only 8 percent of 16-24 year olds had not considered leaving the country, rising to 12 percent for the 25-34 age group, 21 percent for the 35-44 age group and 22 percent for the 45-54 age group. Interest in emigration therefore declines with age (Figure 4.1).

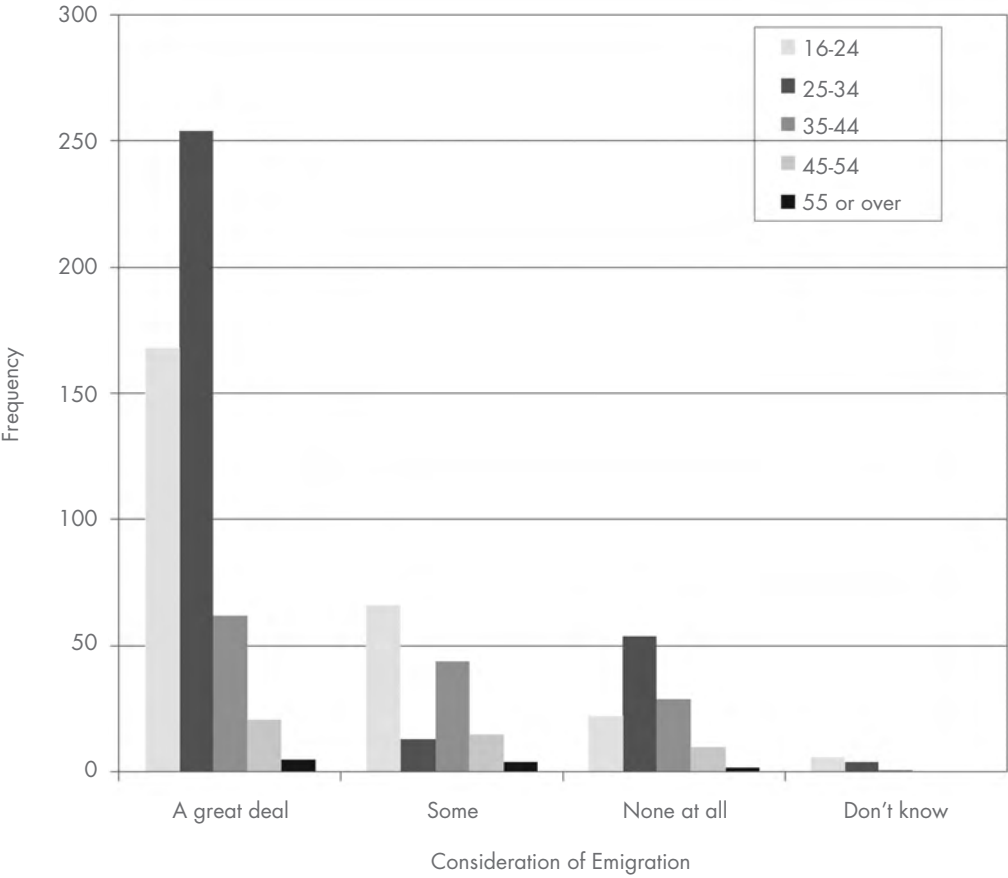


Figure 4.1: Emigration Potential by Age Group

Nevertheless, levels of dissatisfaction in Zimbabwe were so high that the vast majority in each age group had given serious thought to leaving.

Zimbabweans had also given much more thought to emigration than their counterparts elsewhere in SADC. In comparison with Zimbabwe's 57 percent, only 33 percent of skilled people in Lesotho had given emigration a great deal of consideration, 31 percent had done so in South Africa and only 13 percent in Botswana. Or again, while only 13 percent of skilled Zimbabweans had given no thought to leaving, the equivalent figure was 58 percent in Botswana, 32 percent in Lesotho and 31 percent in South Africa.

The potential pool of emigrants in the skilled Zimbabwean population was therefore massive and unparalleled by regional standards. However, this does not mean that all of these people will necessarily leave:

Thinking about leaving, and wanting to do it, are one thing. Actually doing so is quite another...Emigration is a formal and often lengthy process that involves obtaining official documentation, preparing applications and organizing employment opportunities, quite apart from the sheer logistics of the move. Thus people who have mentally set a specific date, or at least a time frame, for leaving are far more likely to act upon their desires than those who leave it as an open-ended question.¹¹

The survey of skilled and professional Zimbabweans therefore sought to establish the extent to which they had a mental commitment to emigrate within a specified time frame (Table 4.5). Specifying a time frame for departure cut the levels of potential emigration, but not nearly as dramatically as one might have expected. The respondents were first asked about the likelihood of emigrating within the next six months. Just over a quarter (27 percent) said it was likely or very likely that they would leave within 6 months (the equivalent South African figure was 7 percent). Slightly more than half (55 percent) considered it likely or very likely that they would emigrate within two years (South Africa: 25 percent). In all, 67 percent indicated that they were likely or very likely to leave the country within five years (South Africa: 42 percent). In other words, in South Africa there was marked difference between the desire to leave and the stated likelihood of doing so. In Zimbabwe, this gap proved to be extremely narrow.

Table 4.5: Commitment to Emigrate Amongst Skilled Zimbabweans

	Very Likely (%)	Likely (%)	Unlikely (%)	Very Unlikely (%)	Don't Know (%)
Within Six Months	14	13	32	33	8
Within Two Years	19	36	19	15	11
Within Five Years	37	30	10	10	14

The students expressed an even stronger likelihood of leaving – just over half (56 percent) said that they were likely or very likely to emigrate within six months of graduat-

ing. Some 70 percent said it was likely or very likely they would leave within two years of graduating.

The firmest indicator of a person's emigration potential is whether they have actually begun applying for emigration documentation. Despite the very high emigration potential captured by other indicators, fewer respondents had started the process of applying for emigration documents. Six percent of the skilled respondents had actually applied for a work permit in another country while 13 percent were in the process of applying. Thus, there was a potential loss of nearly 20 percent of the country's skilled workforce to other countries in the short term. The students had gone further in their commitment to emigrating: over a quarter had already applied for, or were in the process of applying for, a work permit in another country. Around 15 percent had applied for, or were in the process of applying for, permanent residence in another country and a similar proportion were seeking citizenship in another country.

In sum, amongst both professionals and students there was a decline in the predictors of emigration as the survey moved from consideration, to likelihood, to taking active steps to leave. In other words, "as greater mental and physical commitments are required from the respondent, emigration potential declines."¹² The propensity of students to emigrate was higher than for professionals, but for both groups, all of the indicators of emigration potential were higher than those for the other countries in which SAMP conducted similar research (Botswana, Lesotho and South Africa). Particularly notable was the fact that there was only a marginal decline in Zimbabwe between desire and likelihood. Zimbabweans, as their actual behaviour confirms, are doing much more than simply thinking about leaving.

Emigration can be either temporary or permanent. Most emigrants have an idea, when they leave, about which they intend (although things may work out differently in practice; those who leave temporarily often end up staying, those who leave for good sometimes return if things do not work out as they hoped). Nevertheless, it was important to determine whether Zimbabwe's potential emigration pool consists primarily of those who wish to leave for only a short period or those who want to go away for longer. As many as half of the skilled Zimbabweans expressed a strong desire to leave "permanently." Only 25 percent had a strong desire to leave for a short period (less than two years). In other words, this is a population more interested in getting out of the country for good. In general, the respondents wanting to

leave permanently were in the under 40 age group, had fewer dependants and were mostly single.

In contrast to many students in Southern Africa, Zimbabweans proved to be more interested in long-term emigration from the country. Some 62 percent wanted to leave for more than two years. As many as half said they would stay away for longer than five years. Many of the students said they would want to become permanent residents (60 percent) and citizens (57 percent) of their intended destination country. The figures for professionals were also high at 52 percent and 48 percent.

The preferred destination of potential skilled emigrants from Zimbabwe was North America (preferred by 34 percent), followed by Europe (29 percent) and Southern Africa (22 percent). The most popular country destinations were, in order of preference, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Botswana, South Africa, Australia/New Zealand and Canada. When it came to their most likely destination, however, Southern Africa rated more highly (at 31 percent), just below North America. This shows that, though most skilled Zimbabweans (77 percent) wished to leave the region entirely, fewer thought they would actually do so. Only Botswana and South Africa rated a mention as desirable or likely destinations. Botswana is preferred to South Africa, yet Zimbabweans felt that it was more likely that they would actually end up in South Africa, testimony to the different employment possibilities and immigration policies of the two neighbouring countries. Botswana is the preferred destination because of concerns over safety in South Africa. However, it is South Africa that remains the region's "economic powerhouse," and as a result is perceived to have better employment prospects. In addition, the immigration laws of South Africa are less stringent than those of Botswana, meaning that practically, it is less difficult for Zimbabwean migrants to physically enter South Africa.

The fact that more people wanted to go to Europe (mainly the UK) than thought it was likely they actually would, suggests a realistic assessment of the barriers to immigration and the harassment and discrimination that nationals from Zimbabwe have been subjected to in the UK in recent years.¹³ The horizons of students were a little more limited. While the majority still wanted to get out of Southern Africa (64 percent) and thought it likely that they would (61 percent), Southern Africa was also seen as both the single most desirable and the single most likely destination (36 percent and 38 percent respectively) of migration. Unlike the working professionals, students preferred Europe to North America and more thought it likely they would end up in Europe.

Table 4.6: Potential Destinations of Emigrants from Zimbabwe

	Preferred Destination		Most Likely Destination	
	Skilled (%)	Students (%)	Skilled (%)	Students (%)
North America	34.0	23.8	31.5	22.3
Europe	26.5	29.1	23.2	28.2
Southern Africa	22.9	36.1	30.9	38.8
Australia/New Zealand	9.0	9.4	7.1	8.0
Other Africa	5.6	1.4	5.7	0.6
Asia	2.0	0.3	1.6	2.1

QUALITY OF LIFE IN ZIMBABWE

Why are so many skilled Zimbabweans leaving? Beyond the obvious explanation of economic collapse and political turmoil, it is useful to see what people themselves feel about their quality of life in Zimbabwe. The country's recent economic travails led to rampant inflation and shortages of consumer goods. By 2001, skilled Zimbabweans still in the country were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the cost of living (89 percent), level of taxation (83 percent), availability of quality affordable products (75 percent), and level of income (72 percent) (Table 4.7). But the dissatisfaction went much deeper. The upkeep of public amenities was a source of dissatisfaction for 74 percent, as was the perceived future for children (71 percent), housing availability (69 percent), medical services (61 percent) and education (57 percent). Over half were dissatisfied with their own safety and that of their family, a response to the poverty-driven growth of crime in Zimbabwe.

The pessimism of many respondents was confirmed in questions asking whether they thought that conditions would improve in the following five years (Table 4.8). Most skilled Zimbabweans in 2001 thought that conditions in the country would get worse, a prediction that was to be only too accurate. Seventy-two percent felt the cost of living would increase and 71 percent thought that the level of taxation would increase, while 67 percent thought that the upkeep of public amenities would decline and 66 percent were worried about the future of their children. They predicted, again correctly, that the high inflation levels in the country would persist and that the level of taxation would remain high. Similarly, the majority of respondents felt that social conditions in the country would deteriorate including public amenities (67 percent said they would get worse),

their children's future (66 percent), suitable housing (62 percent), medical services (62 percent) and schooling (55 percent).

Table 4.7: Satisfaction with the Quality of Life in Zimbabwe

Dissatisfied/Very Dissatisfied with:	Skilled (%)
Economic Circumstances	
Cost of living	89
Level of taxation	83
Availability of quality affordable products	75
Level of income	72
Share of taxes compared to others	64
Job	46
Prospects for professional advancement	46
Job security	45
Social Circumstances	
Upkeep of public amenities	74
Children's future in country	71
Ability to find a suitable house	69
Ability to find adequate medical services	61
Ability to find a good school for children	57
Family's safety	56
Personal safety	56
Customer service	53

When the students were asked the same question, their answers smacked more of despair than pessimism. On virtually every measure, over three-quarters thought that conditions would get worse or much worse in the ensuing five years. They were particularly negative about the HIV and AIDS situation (89 percent thought it would get worse), taxation (88 percent), the upkeep of public amenities (87 percent) and the availability of suitable housing (86 percent). Around 80 percent were concerned about a deterioration in the safety situation, their ability to find a decent job and the cost of living.

Table 4.8: Perceptions of Future Conditions in Zimbabwe

Expected to get Worse/Much Worse in the next 5 years	Skilled (%)	Students (%)
Economic Circumstances		
Cost of living	72	80
Level of taxation	71	88
Availability of quality affordable products	67	84
Level of income	58	75
Share of taxes compared to others	57	88
Job security	47	79
Ability to find desired job	44	80
Prospects for professional advancement	41	72
Social Circumstances		
Upkeep of public amenities	67	87
Children's future in Zimbabwe	66	81
Ability to find a suitable house	62	86
Ability to find adequate medical services	62	82
Ability to find a good school for children	55	79
Family's safety	53	83
Personal safety	52	82
Customer service	51	83
HIV and AIDS situation	-	89

The respondents were then asked to compare conditions in Zimbabwe with those in their most likely destination (MLD). The conditions that proved to be comparatively most attractive to prospective emigrants include the lower cost of living, prospects for professional advancement, availability of quality affordable products and higher incomes in their MLDs (Table 4.9). Better public amenities, medical services and customer services were seen as the most important social differences between Zimbabwe and the MLD. Interestingly, only half thought that they and their families would be safer in their MLD. This is because so many Zimbabweans see South Africa as their MLD and are very aware of the threat of criminal and xenophobic violence. On every single measure, the students said that conditions would be better in their MLD than did the skilled respondents.

Table 4.9: Comparison Between Zimbabwe and Most Likely Destination

Better/Much Better in Most Likely Destination	Skilled (%)	Students (%)
Economic Conditions		
Cost of living	88	91
Level of income	87	93
Availability of quality affordable products	86	90
Ability to find desirable job	82	81
Prospects for professional advancement	79	82
Level of taxation	73	79
Share of taxes compared to others	65	-
Job security	59	71
Social Conditions		
Upkeep of public amenities	74	79
Ability to find adequate medical services	74	85
Customer service	71	81
Future of children	66	68
Ability to find a good school for children	60	72
Ability to find suitable housing	59	71
Personal safety	49	69
Family's safety	49	69

Levels of student dissatisfaction about economic conditions in Zimbabwe were higher than in any other SADC country surveyed (Table 4.10). Only 3 percent were satisfied with their personal economic condition and less than 35 percent were optimistic that conditions would improve in the next five years. Less than 1 percent were satisfied with economic conditions in the country and only 20 percent expected to see any improvement within five years.

The 2001 survey also revealed enormous dissatisfaction with government amongst skilled Zimbabweans. Only 11 percent of the respondents approved/strongly approved of the way the government had performed its job in the previous year. Only 12 percent said they could always trust the government to do what is right, while a mere 15 percent believed that the people in government was interested in hearing what they have to

say. Over 80 percent of skilled Zimbabweans believed that they are unfairly treated by the government. These are extraordinarily high levels of dissatisfaction by any standard.

Table 4.10: Student Satisfaction/Expectations about Economic Conditions

	No.	Students(%)
Satisfaction with current personal economic conditions		
Very satisfied	8	0.7
Satisfied	28	2.4
Expectations of personal economic conditions in 5 years		
Much better	174	14.6
Better	238	19.8
Satisfaction with current economic conditions in Zimbabwe		
Very satisfied	4	0.3
Satisfied	6	0.5
Expectations of economic conditions in Zimbabwe in 5 years		
Much better	57	4.8
Better	185	15.4

CONCLUSION

The dimensions and reasons for the brain drain from Zimbabwe have been well- documented in other SAMP work.¹⁴ In this chapter, we have focused on the attitudes of skilled people towards life in Zimbabwe. For if the skilled population is essentially contented and giving no thought to emigration, then we could safely say that the brain drain is a passing phenomenon which will soon draw to a close. In fact, the primary finding of the two studies reviewed here is exactly the opposite. Zimbabwe's skilled population proved to be not only highly discontented with domestic economic, social and political conditions, but also extremely pessimistic about the possibility of positive change. The net result is a population with an extremely high emigration potential. The surge of out-migration from the country after these surveys were taken suggests that attitudes translated quickly into actions.

Various measures have been mooted by government with a view to keeping people in the country, including compulsory national service and bonding. The coercive approach to the brain drain has not worked particularly well elsewhere, so it is worth asking whether it is likely to have any impact in Zimbabwe. The research showed that such measures could have the opposite effect to that intended, further adding to the burden of discontent that is encouraging so many to leave or think of leaving. The majority of the skilled population in the country has an extremely high emigration potential, and should their plans be realised, the country stands to suffer, perhaps irreparably.

NOTES

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- 2 A. Adepoju, "Perspectives on Migration for Development in a Globalized World System" Paper presented at Sixth International Metropolis Conference, Rotterdam, 2001.
- 3 N. Harris, *Thinking the Unthinkable: The Immigration Myth Exposed* (London: IB Taurus, 2002), p. 87.
- 4 L. Zinyama, "International Migration to and From Zimbabwe and the Influence of Political Changes on Population Movements, 1965-1987" *International Migration Review* 24 (1990), pp. 748-67.
- 5 L. Zinyama, "Cross-Border Movement from Zimbabwe to South Africa" In L. Zinyama and D. Tevera, *Zimbabweans on the Move: Perspectives on International Migration from Zimbabwe*, SAMP Migration Policy Series No. 25, Cape Town, 2002, pp. 26-41; R. Gaidzanwa, "Voting With Their Feet: Migrant Zimbabwean Nurses and Doctors in the Era of Structural Adjustment" Research Report No. 111, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala, 1999.
- 6 D. Tevera and J. Crush, *The New Brain Drain from Zimbabwe*, SAMP Migration Policy Series No. 29, Cape Town, 2003.
- 7 C. Chetsanga, *An Analysis of the Cause and Effect of the Brain Drain in Zimbabwe*, Scientific and Industrial Research and Development Centre, Harare, 2002; A. Chikanda, "Medical Migration in the Post-ESAP Era: Magnitude, Causes and Impact on the Poor" *Development Southern Africa* 24(1) (2004): 47-60.
- 8 "Brain Drain Reaches Unacceptable Level" *Financial Gazette*, July 17-23, 2003.
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- 12 Ibid, p. 32.
- 13 Bloch (in this volume).
- 14 Zinyama and Tevera, *Zimbabweans on the Move*.

THE BIGGEST REWARD

I graduated in 1988 and left Zimbabwe in 1991. At that time you could see that we were beginning to struggle. In terms of patient care and supply of basic drugs and equipment, it was not too bad at that point in time. But you could see that things were really going down. I had completed my two year housemanship in 1989-90, and I saw that for me also, as somebody who had gone this far in life and I was educated, I felt that I was really not making that much headway in terms of raising a family to the extent that I thought I should raise it. So maybe that's what basically pushed me out. I was two years post-qualification but I was still struggling as a doctor, struggling to make it you know. I could not afford decent transport to go to work, let alone afford to buy a house.

It was very easy at that time to get a job in South Africa as it was beginning to come out of international isolation. Health was given a top priority. They imported a lot of health care professionals from other countries and the nurses and the doctors were mainly going to the rural areas, places that had been ignored by the previous regime. So obtaining a job was really easy because they were desperate for doctors. Even completing the immigration formalities was very easy – it could be done swiftly.

It was tough at first when I arrived but the rural area was not as rural as the rural areas in Zimbabwe. It was not deeply rural. But that was a positive step in that you felt that you were being rewarded for your effort at getting an education. The salaries were not bad – you could afford to buy a car at least. Accommodation was provided for by the hospital and it was

very good. Fortunately, I was posted in a hospital that is in the Northern Province, next to the Zimbabwean border. It was a Shangaan speaking community and we share a lot of common words. So it was very easy to learn the local language and within no time people could not tell that I was not Shangaan. The way that I spoke the language – it was so fluent. So that was a plus for me because I found it very easy to integrate because the language barrier was not that much of a problem. Initially it was but I eventually managed to overcome it.

After working for three years in the Northern Provinces, I felt that I was ready to move on so that I could specialise. That's how I ended up in Johannesburg. I specialised in Radiology. After specialising I worked in government at a provincial hospital and then I went into private practice. At first it was quite demanding because of the long working hours. The one thing that I am so grateful for about coming to South Africa is the fact that I have managed to specialise. To begin with, in Zimbabwe there are no specialist schools for radiologists. To specialise in radiology you have to go elsewhere. Even in Africa there are just a few countries where you can specialise as a radiologist. For me that was the highlight of my life. I am so grateful and so happy to have achieved this. I think that was the biggest reward for my move to South Africa.



Chapter Five

Nursing the Health System: The Migration of Health Professionals from Zimbabwe

Abel Chikanda

The brain drain of health professionals from Zimbabwe has had a crippling effect on the country's public health system.¹ The migration of doctors and nurses has been driven by a marked deterioration in working conditions and job prospects at home and unprecedented global opportunities for professional mobility. The poor salaries paid to local professionals compared to those in developed countries have hastened the exodus. By 2000, Zimbabwe had become a leading source country for health professionals, with 51 percent of locally-trained doctors and 25 percent of locally-trained nurses practising abroad.² The growing migration of nurses has had a particularly negative impact on primary patient care. Nurses form the backbone of any health service delivery and their out-migration exacerbates the primary health care crisis in sending countries like Zimbabwe.

In Zimbabwe, the quality of care declined markedly as nurses left the country in growing numbers.³ Patient waiting times increased and the nurses that remained had to cope with heavier workloads. Nurses working in rural areas have been forced into an expanding role, taking on the responsibilities of pharmacist, doctor, physiotherapist and so forth.⁴ Heavy workloads, besides being a manifestation of poor staffing levels, have been an additional motivation to migrate. Nurse migration leads to the appointment of

replacement workers in positions for which they are not trained. Other negative impacts include heavy workloads resulting in poor service provision to the public and the loss of financial investments made in educating the nurses.⁵ The stress of handling HIV and AIDS-related deaths on a daily basis also takes its toll on the nurses who remain.⁶

This chapter examines the causes, dimensions and impacts of nurse migration from Zimbabwe during the period of the late 1990s and early 2000s, drawing on research conducted by the author for the World Health Organization. The research sought to examine the magnitude of, and trends in, the migration of nurses and midwives from the country, establish the effects of the migration on the country's quality of healthcare, identify the causes of migration, and recommend measures for reducing out-migration. All of the evidence suggests that the trends in nurse migration identified in this period have intensified since the research was conducted.

TRENDS IN NURSE MIGRATION

Two main survey instruments were used to collect data for this study. The first aimed to collect information on staffing patterns and workloads at health institutions. Stratified random sampling was employed in selecting healthcare facilities. Seven of Zimbabwe's 10 provinces were randomly selected. In each of these provinces, the main provincial town or city was chosen together with one district health institution and one health centre. In addition, two schools of Nursing and Midwifery were selected; these are located at Harare and Mpilo Central Hospitals. A questionnaire was distributed to each of the health institutions for completion by the hospital superintendent. Only 10 of the 21 health institutions provided information on both staffing patterns and the workload of nursing professionals.

The second research instrument was designed to collect information from individual nursing professionals on a wide range of issues including general working conditions and migration intentions. The individual nurses were drawn from the selected health institutions using stratified random sampling. The number of nurses from each health institution was proportional to the total number employed there. One hundred and fifty-seven questionnaires were administered (Table 5.1). The vast majority of the respondents were nurses (87 percent). The rest were midwives. Both had been trained at nurse training centres scattered throughout the country and most held diploma qualifications.

Only 3 percent were holders of a Bachelor's degree qualification and 1 percent a Master's degree. Twenty percent of the respondents were male, and 80 percent were female showing the dominance of women in the nursing profession in Zimbabwe. The majority of the respondents were married (68 percent) while 21 percent were single, 6 percent widowed and 5 percent divorced. Only 31 percent of the sample were younger than 30. In other words, the majority of those surveyed were experienced professionals with strong family ties to Zimbabwe.

Table 5.1: Profile of Nurses

	%
Sex	
Male	20
Female	80
Marital Status	
Married	68
Divorced	5
Single	21
Widowed	6
Age Group	
20 years and below	3
21-30	28
31-40	34
41-50	17
51-60	6
No Response	12
N = 157	

The large-scale movement of Zimbabwean nurses out of the country is a relatively recent phenomenon. Until the early 1990s, Zimbabwe's economy was performing well and the salaries of nurses were comparatively decent. However, the introduction of the structural adjustment programme (SAP) in 1991 at the behest of the IMF and World Bank resulted in deteriorating conditions in the health sector. Faced with rising inflation and declining salaries in real terms, nurses initially adopted a combative approach,

engaging in strike action in an attempt to press the government to give them living wages and improve their conditions of service. However, high inflation quickly eroded any wage gains made by the nurses.

The government responded by introducing legislation that made it illegal for health professionals, as providers of essential services, to engage in strike action. Living conditions deteriorated further in the late 1990s as donor support from Western nations dried up after the Mugabe government embarked on its controversial land reform programme. Political repression and persecution also grew as the regime's rule came under challenge for the first time since independence. Unable to eke out a decent living, nurses abandoned confrontation and "voted with their feet" by migrating to other countries.⁷ According to one study, nurses were "not interested in political confrontations and struggles which might derail them from focusing on the well-being of their households. By leaving they condemned the political and economic present as inadequate for meeting their needs."⁸

Table 5.2: Distribution of Zimbabwe-Trained Nurses, 2005

Location	No.	% of Total	% of those Abroad
Domestic (i.e. in Zimbabwe)	11,640	75.8	-
UK	2,834	18.4	76.1
USA	440	2.9	11.8
Australia	219	1.4	5.9
South Africa	178	1.2	4.8
Canada	35	0.2	0.9
Portugal	14	0.1	0.4
Spain	3	-	0.1
Total Abroad	3,723	24.2	100
Total	15,363	100	100

Source: M. Clemens and G. Petterson, *A New Database for Health Professional Emigration from Africa* (Washington D.C.: Centre for Global Development, 2005).

Most of those who initially migrated were more experienced nurses with skills that were marketable abroad, leaving behind junior and less-experienced staff. The early

wave went to South Africa, but the post-SAP era saw more Zimbabwean nurses migrating to Western countries (Table 5.2). The change in destination to countries outside the African continent is explained by the shortages of registered nurses in many developed countries.⁹ These countries are faced with an ageing population and they need to care for an increasing number of elderly people.¹⁰ There has also been a reduction in the number of people enrolling in nursing programmes in developed countries, creating severe nursing shortages. In addition, some countries, such as Canada, have experienced their own nurse “brain drain” to the United States.

Western countries have sought to solve their nursing shortages by aggressively recruiting professionals from developing countries such as Zimbabwe. Independent and government-supported recruitment and relocation agencies act as middlemen who initiate contact with prospective employers and manage the subsequent transfer of the professionals to the new destination.¹¹ Nurse migration has left most of Zimbabwe’s health institutions with a skeleton staff struggling to cope with increased workloads and growing demands on their expertise.

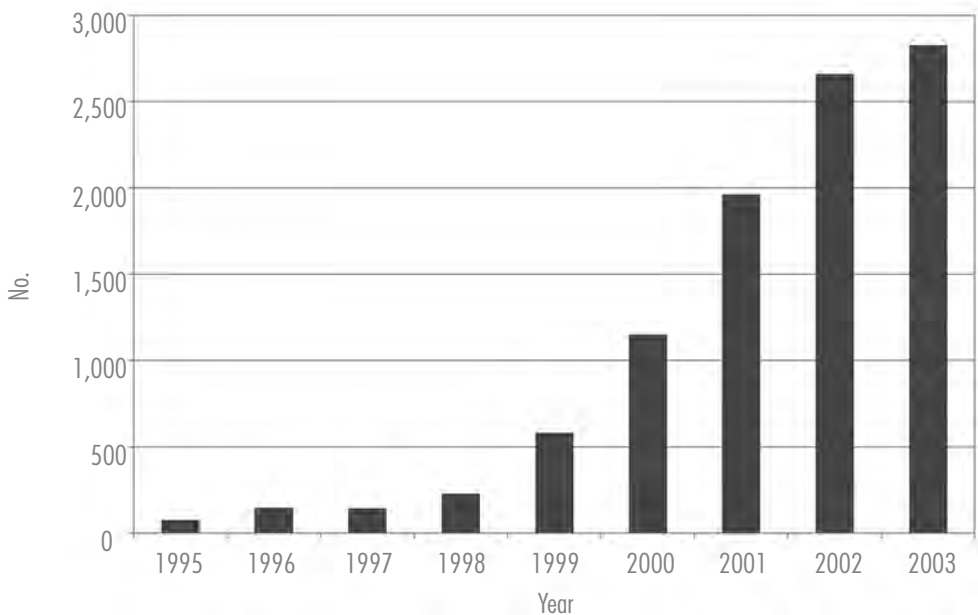


Figure 5.1: Zimbabwean Health Professionals in the UK, 1995-2003

The United Kingdom became the leading destination for nurses and other health professionals from Zimbabwe in the late 1990s. The number of Zimbabwean health professionals in the United Kingdom increased dramatically as political and economic conditions in Zimbabwe deteriorated (Figure 5.1). From a mere 76 health professionals migrating to the UK from Zimbabwe in 1995, the figure increased to 2,825 in 2003. Nurses comprised the majority of these professionals. For instance, of the 2,825 work permits offered to Zimbabwean health professionals in 2002-03, 2,346 (83%) went to nurses.¹² In 2003, Zimbabwe was the UK's fourth largest supplier of overseas nurses, after the Philippines, India and South Africa.

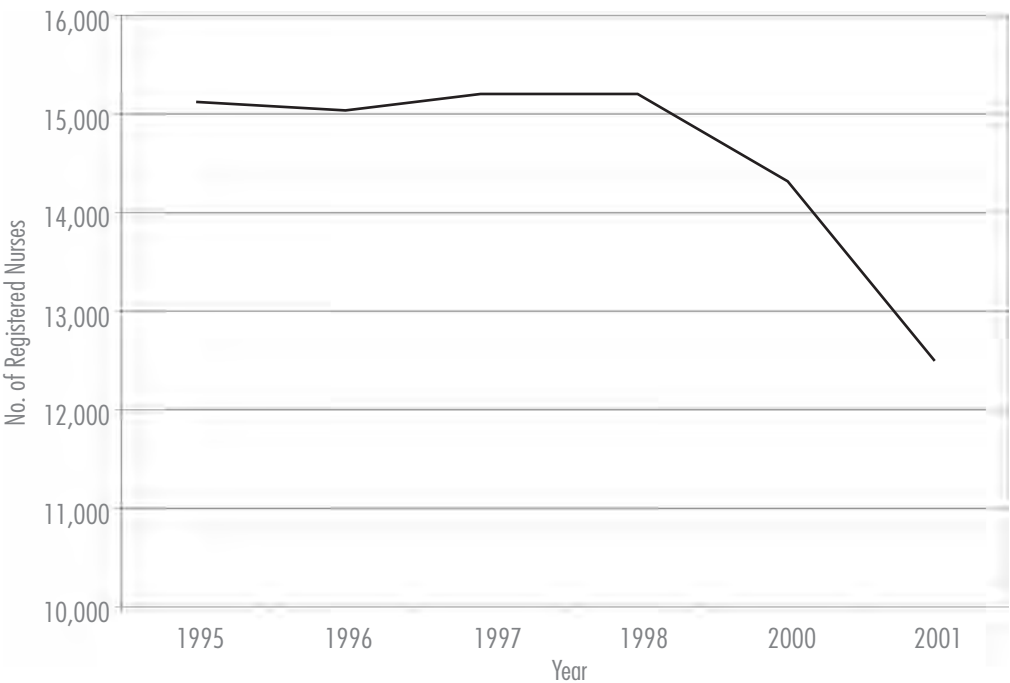


Figure 5.2: Registered Nurses in Zimbabwe, 1995-2001¹⁵

There were two distinct channels of nurse migration from Zimbabwe to the UK in the late 1990s. Some nurses moved through recruitment agencies, which also covered relocation expenses. Others moved as temporary visitors or “political refugees.” The latter often ended up in non-nursing jobs or were employed in nursing homes that did not require them to register with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

The exact magnitude of nurse migration from Zimbabwe is difficult to establish because of a lack of reliable data. Zimbabwe's Ministry of Health and Child Welfare (MoHCW) has no proper mechanisms to monitor the loss of professionals through migration, death or retirement. In the absence of proper statistics, an analysis of trends in registration figures provides useful insights on the magnitude of nurse migration from Zimbabwe. Data from the Central Statistical Office (CSO) shows that the number of registered nursing professionals available in the country was stable up to the late 1990s, when a significant decline was experienced. For instance, while there were 15,476 Registered Nurses (RNs) in Zimbabwe in 1998, only 12,477 remained by December 2001 (Figure 5.2).¹⁴

While there were some marginal increases in nursing categories such as midwives and psychiatric nurses, in other categories dramatic declines were recorded (Table 5.3). For instance, though there were 5,946 State Certified Nurses in 1997, by 2000 only 4,101 remained (a decline of 31 percent). The same trend can be observed for other categories such as State Certified Maternity Nurses and Paediatric Nurses, where net losses of 17 percent and 9 percent respectively were recorded.

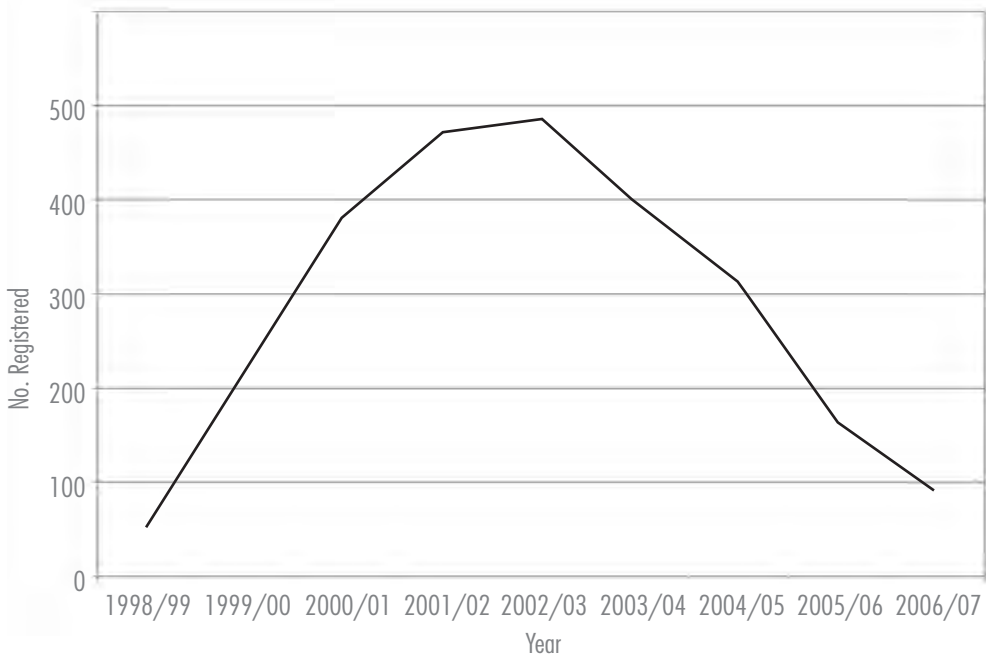


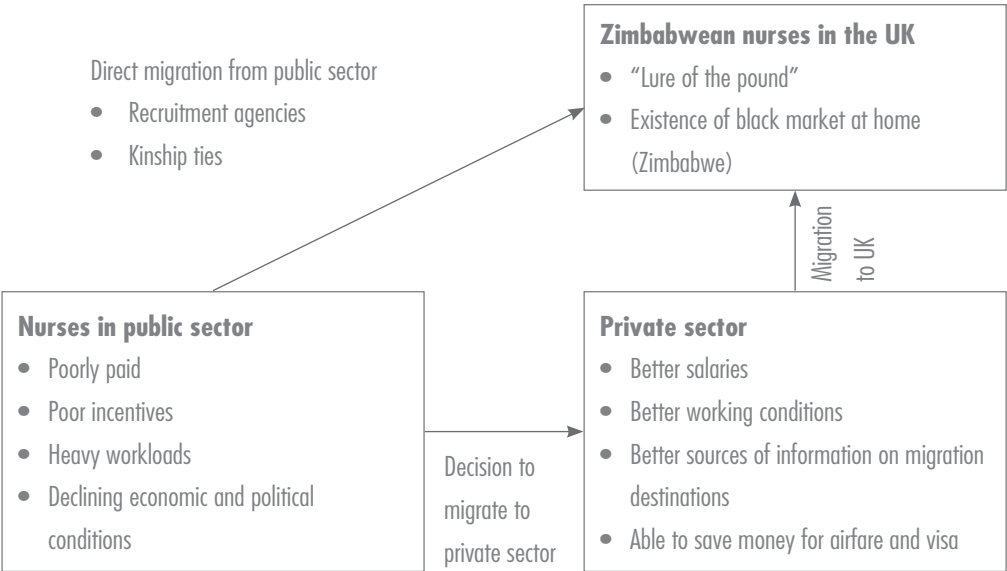
Figure 5.3: Zimbabwean Nurses Registered in the United Kingdom, 1998-2007¹⁶

Table 5.3: Registered Nurses, 1997-2000

	1997	1998	1999	2000
Midwives	3,656	3,840	4,264	4,250
Psychiatric Nurses	496	525	550	547
State Certified Nurses	5,946	5,927	4,773	4,101
State Certified Maternity Nurses	3,912	3,922	3,572	3,257
Paediatric Nurses	22	23	20	20

Source: Central Statistical Office (CSO), *Zimbabwe: Facts and Figures 2001/2002* (Harare, 2003).

The loss of nurses and midwives from Zimbabwe's health sector was reflected in a corresponding increase in the number of Zimbabwean-trained nurses in the UK. For instance, while 52 nurses were registered by the NMC in 1998-99, as many as 485 were on the register in 2002-03 (Figure 5.3). The actual figure was much higher, especially given the fact that some Zimbabwean-trained nurses are employed in other jobs where they are not required to register with the NMC. Between 2003 and 2007, the number of nurses registered fell to under 100.



Due to these factors the nurse decides to move to the private sector

Figure 5.4: The Stepwise Migration of Zimbabwean Nurse Professionals

The shortage of nurses in Zimbabwe's health sector became more severe in public health institutions than in privately-run ones. In fact, a considerable number of nurses in Zimbabwe moved to the private sector which offered better remuneration and other conditions of service. In 1997, the public sector employed only 7,923 nurses out of a total requirement of 14,251 (or 56 percent), when the country had 16,407 RNs.¹⁷ The privately-run health institutions thus employed 8,484 (or 51 percent) of all the RNs in the country, mostly in the urban areas.

The survey found that there was considerable stepwise migration in the behaviour of Zimbabwean nurses (Figure 5.4). In stepwise migration, a horizontal move is undertaken with the intention of assisting in a vertical or outward movement. In the case of Zimbabwean nurses, the "sideways" internal move to the private sector meant better salaries and increased opportunities to migrate to an overseas destination. Nurses initially moved to the private sector to enable them to save the necessary airfares, which eventually facilitated their move abroad. Besides being paid better, nurses employed in the private sector had better access to information due to their mainly urban location. When the nurses moved to the private sector, they thus increased their chances of moving abroad.

Not all nurses were involved in stepwise migration. In some cases, nurses migrated directly from the public sector to the UK. Friends and relatives residing abroad played a facilitating role by purchasing the air ticket for the prospective migrant and hosting them on arrival. In some cases, nurses employed in rural areas with good information networks also moved directly to an international destination. This is consistent with other findings that it is no longer necessary for international migration to have a national prologue, that is, the preliminary transfer to urban areas that was the classic launching pad for international migration until a few years ago.¹⁸

IMPACTS OF NURSE MIGRATION

The public sector is the principal provider of healthcare in most African countries, including Zimbabwe. Information from the MoHCW on the staffing situation in the country's public health institutions showed a general decline in nurse employment in the 1990s (Figure 5.5). The number of nurses employed in the public health sector fell by nearly 20 percent, from 8,662 in 1996 to 7,007 in 1999. This decline occurred at a time when the country's training institutions produced 1,370 new nurses. While some nurses might have left the

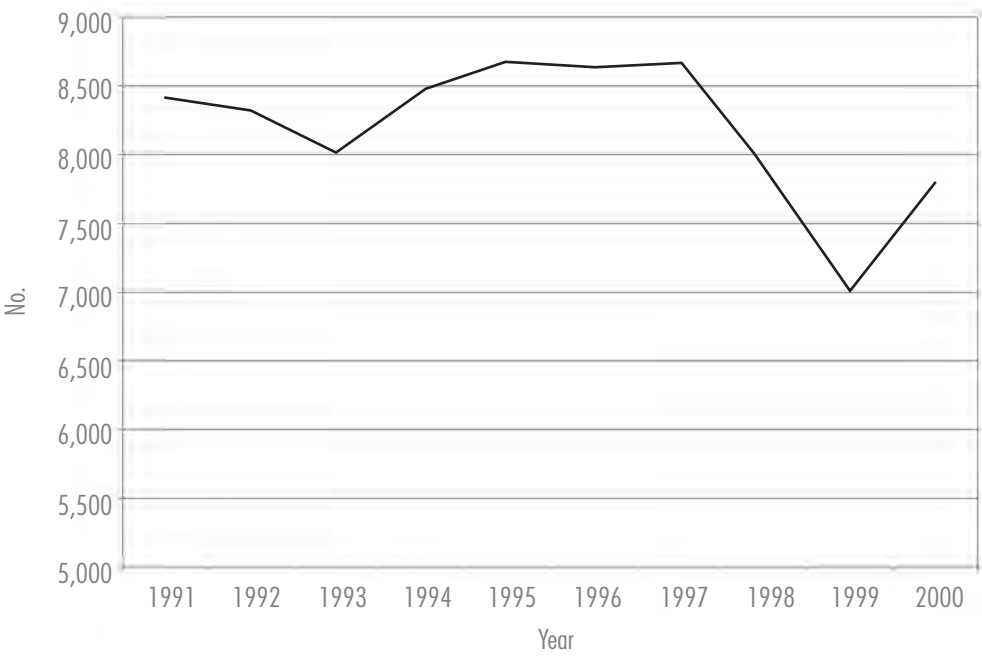


Figure 5.5: Number of Nurses in the Public Health Sector, 1991-2000

public sector through attrition (such as retirement and death), or moved to the private sector or left nursing altogether, a significant part of the decline is attributable to out-migration.

The MoHCW's nursing staff requirements for 1997 stood at 14,251, but only 56 percent of the posts were filled. Evidence that movement from the public to the private sector was occurring can be gauged from changes in the share of nurses employed in the public sector. The public sector share of nurses in Zimbabwe fell significantly from 58 percent in 1996 to 45 percent in 1999 (Figure 5.6). The number of nurses registered nationally also provides corroborating evidence. The number rose marginally from 15,096 in 1995 to 15,476 in 1999 (an increase of 2.5 percent), while the number of nurses employed in public health institutions declined from 8,635 in 1995 to 7,007 in 1999 (a reduction of 19 percent).

The departure of nursing professionals for the private sector and through emigration led to serious staff shortages in public sector health institutions and an increase in the number of vacant posts. Harare Central Hospital, for instance, employed 676 nurses in 1998 and 594 in 2000 (Table 5.4). The dramatic increase in the number of vacant

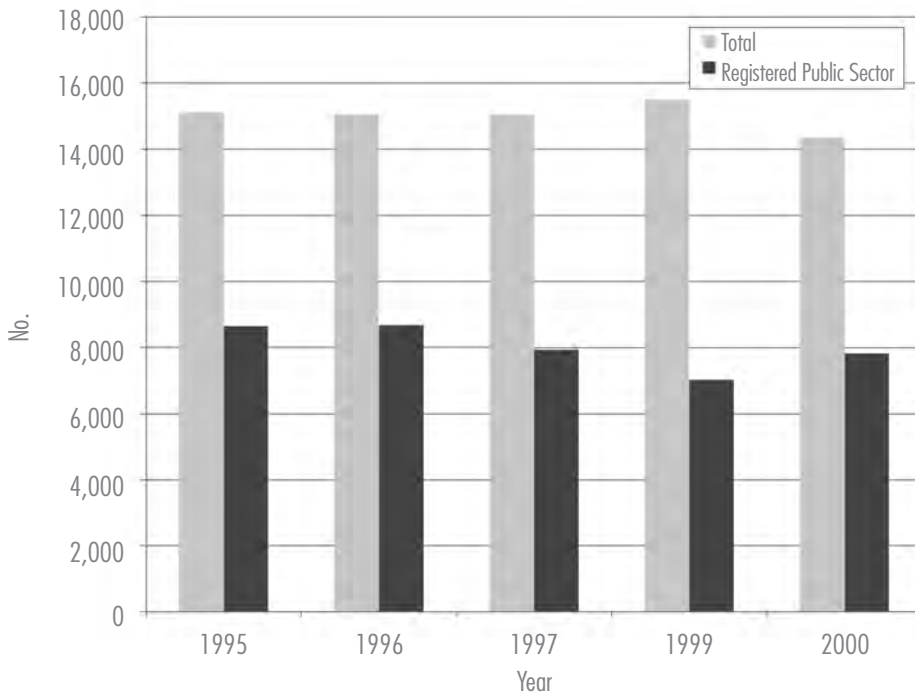


Figure 5.6: Public versus Private Sector Share of Nurses

posts in 2000 was partially due to an increase in the number of established posts from 794 to 934. Gweru Provincial Hospital as well as Kadoma District Hospital, on the other hand, experienced marginal growth in the number of nurses employed during the period studied. Both also recorded an increase in the number of vacant posts owing to the allocation of additional established posts.

Two main factors explain the large number of vacant posts in large urban areas compared to smaller centres. First, nurses in large centres (like Harare) were lured to join the private sector, which offered better returns. Private practices are more prevalent in these urban areas. Second, increased flows of information and easy access to communication networks in urban areas exposed the nurses to job opportunities in developed countries, both regionally and overseas.

The survey of in-country nursing professionals revealed enormous dissatisfaction with working conditions. As many as 67 percent of public sector nurses were considering a move to the private sector. The most common reasons given were better remuneration

Table 5.4: Nurse Staffing Patterns at Selected Public Health Institutions

		1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Harare Central Hospital	Established Posts	-	-	-	794	794	934
	Number at Post	-	-	-	676	606	594
	Vacant Posts	-	-	-	118	188	340
Gweru Provincial Hospital	Established Posts	236	242	242	242	242	242
	Number at Post	231	230	237	238	232	235
	Vacant Posts	5	12	5	4	10	7
Kadoma District Hospital	Established Posts	-	108	112	116	119	119
	Number at Post	-	105	90	105	113	112
	Vacant Posts	-	3	22	11	6	7
Epworth Poly Clinic	Established Posts	-	-	-	7	7	7
	Number at Post	-	-	-	5	5	4
	Vacant Posts	-	-	-	2	2	3
Mutare Provincial Hospital	Established Posts	195	195	195	195	195	202
	Number at Post	188	190	195	191	185	190
	Vacant Posts	7	5	0	4	10	12
Kariba District Hospital	Established Posts	34	34	34	34	34	34
	Number at Post	24	24	24	24	24	24
	Vacant Posts	10	10	10	10	10	10
Nyanga District Hospital	Established Posts	-	-	-	-	-	58
	Number at Post	-	-	-	-	-	54
	Vacant Posts	-	-	-	-	-	4
Waverly Clinic	Established Posts	5	5	6	6	6	6
	Number at Post	2	2	2	3	2	2
	Vacant Posts	3	3	4	3	4	4
Rimuka Maternity Clinic	Established Posts	15	15	15	15	20	20
	Number at Post	4	4	10	10	11	11
	Vacant Posts	11	11	5	5	9	9
Nyameni Clinic	Established Posts	16	16	16	16	16	16
	Number at Post	11	11	13	13	13	13
	Vacant Posts	5	5	3	3	3	3

and working conditions. Even those who had chosen to remain in the public sector said that they were often involved in “moonlighting” in private health institutions.

As many as 71 percent of the nurses were considering leaving the country. Their most likely destination (MLD) was the UK (30 percent) (Table 5.5). However, a quarter of the respondents (24 percent) preferred destinations within Africa (mostly South Africa followed by Botswana). Other fairly popular destinations cited by the respondents included Australia (6 percent), the USA (3 percent), New Zealand (3 percent) and Canada (3 percent). Even though intentions do not automatically translate into actions, the extent of dissatisfaction in the public health sector was clearly massive.

Table 5.5: Most Likely Destinations of Zimbabwean Migrants

Most Likely Destination	%
United Kingdom	30
Another Country in Africa	24
Australia	6
United States of America	3
New Zealand	3
Canada	3
Other	2
Not Thinking of Moving	29

N = 157

The study sought to establish the reasons why nurses wanted to migrate. It hypothesized that declining economic conditions would be the primary cause of emigration in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Political factors also gained greater prominence, as the country’s major political parties fought fierce battles, first in the 2000 parliamentary elections, and then in the 2002 presidential elections. The campaigns were associated with widespread violence, which was more severe in rural areas. This saw many professionals fleeing for their own safety as well as for that of their children. The working conditions of health professionals are critical to their migration decisions. A study in 1999 revealed that health professionals in Zimbabwe were extremely disgruntled with their working conditions. Professional factors also influenced the decision to emigrate.

Table 5.6: Reasons for Intention to Move

Reason	%
Economic	55.6
To save money quickly to buy a car, pay off a home loan, or for a similar reason	56.7
Because of a general decline in the economic situation in this country	56.1
Because I will receive better remuneration in another country	54.1
Political	31.2
Because I see no future in this country	47.8
Because there is a general sense of despondency in this country	24.2
Professional	29.3
Because of a lack of resources and facilities within the health care system of this country	47.8
Because there is a general decline in the health care services of this country	43.3
Because the workload in the health services of this country is too heavy	42.7
To gain experience abroad	31.8
Because of insufficient opportunities for promotion and self-improvement	29.9
Because of the poor management of the health services in this country	29.9
Because I need to upgrade my professional qualifications due to the unsatisfactory quality of education and training in this country	21.0
Because I cannot find a suitable job in this country	11.5
Because an unacceptable work tempo is expected of me in this country	9.6
Because I was recruited to work in the country I intend to move to	8.3
Social	24.8
To find better living conditions	47.8
Because the value systems in this country have declined to such an extent that I can no longer see my way clear to remain here	34.4
To ensure a safer environment for my children	25.5
Because of the high levels of violence and crime in this country	21.7
To join family/friends abroad	16.6
To travel and see the world	15.3
Because of family related matters	9.6

N = 157

Note: More than one answer permitted

The survey showed that economic factors dominated the desire to migrate. They included the wish to save money quickly for use in Zimbabwe (mentioned by 57 percent), the general economic decline (56 percent) and the desire for better remuneration (54 percent). The growth of a parallel market for foreign currency exchange on the domestic market made it even more attractive for nursing professionals to move to countries in the developed world to accumulate savings. Professional factors influencing emigration included the lack of resources and facilities within the healthcare system of the country (48 percent), heavy workloads (43 percent) and insufficient opportunities for promotion and self-improvement (30 percent). Major social factors included the desire to find better living conditions (48 percent), the desire to ensure a safer environment for their children (26 percent) and the high levels of crime and violence in the country (22 percent).

Most nurses in Zimbabwe are officially supposed to be on duty for between 31 and 40 hours a week (i.e. about 8 hours a day). However, due to staffing problems, some end up working up to 4 extra hours a day. In the study, some were on duty for more than 50 hours weekly, 10 hours more than the stipulated national average. This is because the shortage of nurses in the country's public health institutions has increased the workload of those who choose to remain. As many as 78 percent of the nurses expressed dissatisfaction over the number of patients they attend to per day, which they regard as extremely high. They blamed emigration for the increase. The migration of nurses is thus both a cause of ongoing migration (by increasing the workloads of remaining health professionals) and an effect (due to the reduction of available health professionals).

The shortage of foreign currency in Zimbabwe has also affected service delivery in most health institutions, which rely on drugs and equipment that are mostly imported from other countries. Nearly 80 percent of the nurses indicated that they lack basic equipment, such as needles and thermometers, at their health institutions. The absence of such basic equipment makes it difficult for nurses to conduct their duties efficiently and negatively affects morale.

Zimbabwe is one of several Sub-Saharan African countries badly affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, with an estimated 25–30 percent of the sexually active population infected with the virus.²⁰ The impact of HIV/AIDS on health system workers was not specifically identified as a reason for migration.²¹ However, the Joint Learning Initiative identified three potential impacts of HIV/AIDS on the health workforce.²² First, the health

sector is losing workers due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Nurses are dying and are not being replaced. Second, health workers are faced with extra workloads, as HIV/AIDS patients comprise a majority of their patients. Third, fear of exposure to the disease is itself a source of attrition, especially where precautionary measures are not strictly followed.

The interviews with individual nurses revealed that a sizeable number of health institutions were not taking measures to protect them from the virus. Only 60 percent of the nurses indicated that their health institutions were taking adequate precautions against HIV infection. The absence of such measures creates an unsafe environment for professionals. Not surprisingly, 64 percent said that they were constantly worried that they would become infected through an injury at work. Health workers, particularly nurses and midwives, reported a shortage of gloves which increases their risk of contracting the virus, especially when conducting deliveries. Some nurses suggested that a risk allowance be introduced. The disease has also increased the workload of health professionals, with 66 percent indicating that they find caring for HIV/AIDS patients stressful. In sum, the epidemic is clearly having a major impact on the levels of work stress and perceptions of personal risk. To that extent, it may also be a factor prompting people to move to the private sector or out of the country.

In Zimbabwe, nurses run most health centres situated in the disadvantaged rural areas. As noted, nurses working in rural areas have, over the years, taken on expanded roles as pharmacists, doctors, physiotherapists and so forth.²³ This has negatively impacted on the workload of nurses, particularly those stationed in outlying regions. According to MoHCW estimates, the national nurse/patient ratio in 2000 was one nurse to 700 patients.²⁴ This study established that only the provincial health institutions had nurse to patient ratios lower than the national average (Table 5.7). For instance, the nurse/patient ratio was 1:177 for Gweru Provincial Hospital and 1:522 for Mutare Provincial Hospital. This compares to a nurse/patient ratio of 1:1,484 at Kadoma District Hospital and 1:3,023 at Nyanga District Hospital. The situation was even worse for nurses at the health centres (where doctor visits are rare). For instance, the nurse to patient ratio at Waverly Clinic (a health centre in Kadoma) stood at 1:7,500 and at 1:10,500 for Epworth Poly Clinic (a health centre on the outskirts of Harare). Nurses employed at health centres clearly had the heaviest workloads, a situation that improved at the district and provincial health institutions level. The study also established that less qualified staff (namely nurse aides) were carrying out many nursing duties at health centres.

Table 5.7: Patient Attendance at Selected Health Institutions in Zimbabwe, 1995-2000

		1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Gweru Provincial Hospital	No. of patients	143,196	126,369	39,428	40,503	40,819	41,629
	No. at post	231	230	237	238	232	235
	Attendance/ nurse	620	549	166	170	176	177
Kadoma District Hospital	No. of patients	192,707	133,509	181,185	182,755	180,087	166,255
	No. at post	112	105	90	105	113	112
	Attendance/ nurse	1,721	1,272	2,013	1,741	1,594	1,484
Epworth Poly Clinic	No. of patients	-	-	-	22,440	38,000	42,000
	No. at post	-	-	-	5	5	4
	Attendance/ nurse	-	-	-	4,488	7,600	10,500
Mutare Provincial Hospital	No. of patients	-	-	-	-	-	112,562
	No. at post	-	-	-	-	-	190
	Attendance/ nurse	-	-	-	-	-	592
Nyanga District Hospital	No. of patients	-	-	-	-	196,297	163,247
	No. at post	-	-	-	-	54	54
	Attendance/ nurse	-	-	-	-	3635	3023
Waverly Clinic	No. of patients	8,000	9,500	9,500	10,500	11,000	15,000
	No. at post	2	2	2	3	2	2
	Attendance/ nurse	4,000	4,750	4,750	3,500	5,500	7,500
Rimuka Maternity Clinic	No. of patients	22,000	22,000	21,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
	No. at post	4	4	10	10	11	11
	Attendance/ nurse	5,500	5,500	2,100	2,000	1,818	1,818
Nyameni Clinic	No. of patients	-	20,821	24,009	20,608	17,915	19,243
	No. at post	-	11	13	13	13	13
	Attendance/ nurse	-	1,893	1,847	1,585	1,378	1,480

Poor job satisfaction and low morale are endemic among health professionals in Southern Africa.²⁵ The study showed that nurse professionals in public employment were augmenting their salaries by legal and illegal means. This included moonlighting in private health facilities and attending to non-medical businesses. The public sector is thus largely left with individuals who are poorly motivated to perform their work. However, some remained in the public sector where job security, career advancement, and opportunities for further training were greater.²⁶

The migration of skilled health professionals from the country also adversely affected the quality of care in health institutions.²⁷ This can generally be attributed to low morale resulting from excessive workloads and the stress of dealing with so many dying patients. The shortage of nurses has led to reduced consultation times and diagnosis and prescription of treatment are hurried. Furthermore, more than half (55 percent) of the nurses interviewed reported that they were sometimes forced to perform duties which should ideally be offered by another specialised member of the health team. This practice has had two main consequences: first, it increased the workload of nurse professionals and second, the lives of patients were endangered as general nurses ended up performing more specialised duties beyond their training or expertise.

Rural areas are particularly disadvantaged. They often do not have basic infrastructure such as all-weather roads, electricity and clean water supplies. In addition, rural health centres often lack basic drugs and equipment and are understaffed. This translates into heavy workloads for the few nurses posted in such areas. Because of such factors, the rural to urban movement of health professionals within the public sector became common and the staffing situation in rural health institutions continued to worsen. Some nurses in rural areas moved directly to private health institutions in urban areas, a move that entailed changing both geographical location and employer.

CONCLUSION

Most of the country's public health institutions had become grossly understaffed by 2003 and the skeletal staff that remained was reeling under heavy workloads. Both urban and rural health institutions were affected by emigration, but the rural areas were hardest hit and served by un- or under-qualified health staff. The situation was better in urban areas, which had alternative sources of medical healthcare in the form of private health

institutions. Besides offering better services to patients, albeit at a higher fee, the private health sector provided an escape route for disgruntled public health sector nurse professionals. But the private sector is inaccessible to the bulk of the population and also acts as a jumping-off point for migration abroad.

At the global level, piecemeal attempts have been made to reduce the migration of health professionals from developing to developed countries.²⁸ Protocols such as the Commonwealth Code of Practice for the International Recruitment of Health Workers and its companion document cannot yield meaningful results as long as they are voluntary and non-binding. What are needed are policies that reduce the systematic recruitment of nurses by developed countries from poor countries. Of course, such policy instruments need to be sensitive to the needs of nurse professionals, for example, that advanced training can only be met by migration. The challenge then is to create a workable policy that responds to the needs of the nurses, whilst at the same time discouraging developed nations from benefitting unfairly from human resources that they did not invest financial resources in training.

The high rate of nurse emigration from Zimbabwe from the late 1990s led the government to adopt several measures to try to contain the problem. First, it introduced bonding of newly qualified nurse professionals. All nurses who started their training in 1997 and thereafter were bonded by the government for 3 years. However, after the bonding period, the nurses were free to make their own decisions about where they wanted to work. The nurses dutifully served the period of bonding and then migrated to other countries. Thus, bonding only acted as a delaying mechanism to migration and did not address its root causes. Second, fellowship and scholarship programmes, as well as advanced training programmes, were introduced to enhance the capacity of the health professionals in the provision of their services. They were also meant to reduce the migration of nurses who left to further their studies. Third, salary reviews were introduced to cushion health professionals from the effects of inflation and the high cost of living. However, with hyperinflation, the salary reviews constantly lagged behind, negatively affecting the livelihoods of health professionals. Lastly, performance management was introduced in the health sector. While performance management led to greater professional acknowledgement, the results were not generally implemented because of stiff resistance to the policy within the system.

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BACK TO REALITY

My husband was in the Zimbabwean army but after many of his colleagues disappeared, he eventually fled. He said, "They don't have to kill me to get my job. I'll resign." He left Zimbabwe on foot and sought political asylum in another African country. We didn't hear from him for a year. Then myself and our three children joined him. We remained as refugees in that country for two years before our application to migrate to Canada was accepted. When we arrived in Toronto, a Canadian official came to interview us. He asked which part of Canada did we want to settle in. We didn't know anybody in Canada and so it didn't matter where he sent us. This very nice gentlemen decided to send us to his home town, a small town in Ontario. He said he loved it there and it was a good place to bring up kids. We are still here. This community has been very good to us.

We had our ups and downs and our marriage was greatly tested. For myself, I think I adjusted pretty well. I had to adapt. I came from Zimbabwe with only a high school diploma. I enrolled in the university here as a mature student for a BA in Psychology. My very first paid job was as a casual bank teller while I continued with my studies. At the same time I volunteered in several shelters. I later got casual employment with the shelters as a front-line supportive counsellor. The reserve army was advertising for recruits so I signed up just to earn some income on the weekends. This was a rough go, training and everything. I served for two years and then resigned. After I finished my degree, I worked for Corrections Canada as a correctional officer and for a while I kept my casual jobs as well.

I had heard of a woman who worked at the psychiatric hospital who had moved in a few patients into her home to look after them. I thought, “What an incredible woman. Some day when my finances permit, I will do this.” I found out that I didn’t need to wait as the patients come with their own money for rent and food. I called one organization and told them “I will take in a couple of people who have no families and look after them. In my country we do this without pay.” Later I moved my family to a house that would allow me to open a group home with three beds. My first resident was a patient they had not been able to place for 17 years and this was a great success, hence the beginning of my business. I got more and more applicants, and so I expanded.

Now I have three homes including one twenty-four-hour care home. The other two homes are for higher functioning residents. It is a lot of hard work and long hours. But I thank God every day because the income is helping me support family back home as well. Without this business, with just my psychology degree, there is just no way I could carry a mortgage, raise my children and support the family back home. When I start to whine a little bit I just have to take a quick look at the situation in Zimbabwe and I’m jolted back to reality.



Chapter Six

Transnational Lives: The Experience of Zimbabweans in Britain

Alice Bloch

The recent exodus from Zimbabwe has been a consequence of economic crisis and repressive policies aimed at curbing political opposition.¹ The result has not only been migration to the Southern African region but also elsewhere in the world, including the United Kingdom (UK). It is not possible to accurately determine the number of Zimbabweans in the UK because of the long history of migration between the two countries – both colonial and postcolonial. Some Zimbabweans are now naturalised citizens, others have indefinite leave to remain, and some are refugees or asylum seekers. Still others have come under family reunification.

In addition, Zimbabweans come to the UK on a temporary basis through work or student visas such as the Highly Skilled Migrants Programme (HSMP) which accounted for the arrival of 399 highly skilled Zimbabweans between January 2002 and September 2006.² After 2000, there was a notable increase in the number arriving in the UK as asylum seekers or applying for asylum in-country. The difficulty in estimating numbers is exacerbated by some who remain in the UK as undocumented migrants when visas have expired or asylum claims have been rejected. Others have entered the UK on false passports.

Estimates from Home Office data place the number of Zimbabweans in the UK at less than 30,000, while at the other end of the spectrum, Zimbabwean media sources

report more than one million – clearly a huge differential which questions the validity of estimates.³ What is known is that the number of Zimbabweans in Britain rose gradually from the late 1990s with people entering the UK using a variety of routes. By 2000 most of those who left Zimbabwe felt that they had been forced to leave.⁴ When the UK government placed visa restrictions on Zimbabweans entering the UK in 2002, in response to increasing numbers, the impact was an immediate reduction in the number able to seek asylum (Figure 6.1).

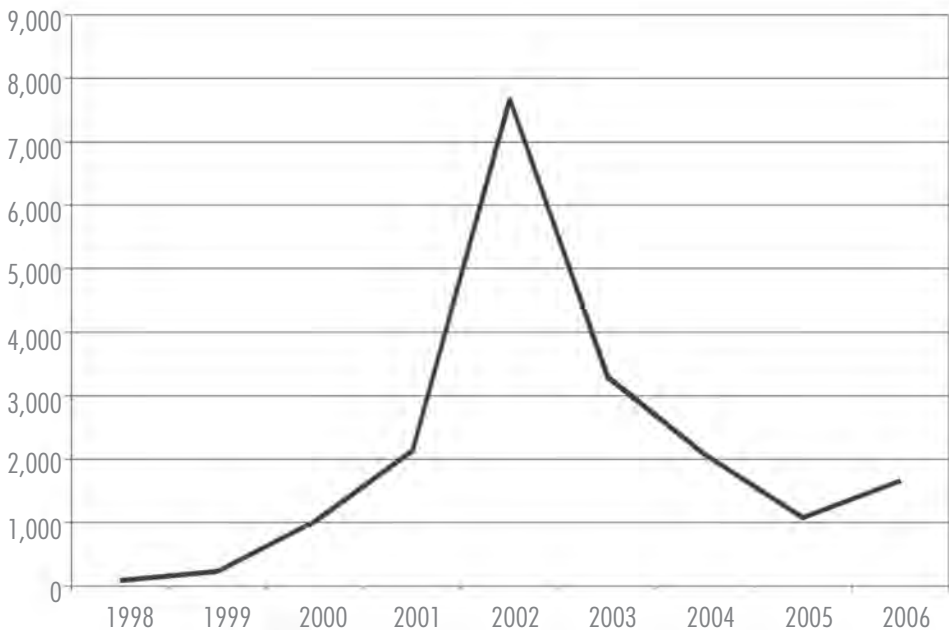


Figure 6.1: Zimbabwean Applications for Asylum in the UK (Excluding Dependents), 1998 to 2006

Source: K. Bennett, T. Heath and R. Jeffries, *Asylum Statistics United Kingdom* (London: Home Office, 2007).

The visa regime in the UK, which is part of a wider strategy to demonize asylum seekers and limit migration to all but skilled migrant workers, has been a priority of recent Labour governments.⁵ According to the Refugee Council, the imposition of visa requirements “represents a failure to respect the right to seek asylum [and] contradicts UNHCR’s request that states not impose visa requirements on the nationals of countries where there are civil wars, generalized violence or widespread human rights abuse.”⁶ The consequence of imposing visa requirements on nationals of refugee-producing countries,

such as Zimbabwe, is the closure of accessible and legitimate routes for entering the UK, increasing the costs of migration and criminalizing asylum seekers who have been forced into irregular migration strategies including the use of false passports.⁷ In the Zimbabwean case, the very process of obtaining a visa is not only expensive but also very difficult and, on occasion, dangerous.⁸ Not surprisingly, Zimbabweans who arrive in the UK tend to be among the middle classes with the necessary financial resources at a time of hyper-inflation, and support and connections to afford long distance travel.⁹ The consequence is that the social, educational and economic characteristics of Zimbabweans in the UK are less diverse than those living in South Africa.¹⁰

This chapter draws on a sub-sample of data from 500 Zimbabweans living in the UK and is taken from a larger survey of 1,000 Zimbabweans living in the UK and South Africa. The aim is to explore the social and economic lives of Zimbabweans in the UK. More specifically, pre- and post-migration educational qualifications and employment experiences are examined to show the ways in which Zimbabweans, many of whom are highly educated and skilled on arrival to the UK, are becoming deskilled. The chapter then explores social and diasporic networks and their interaction with aspirations for return migration and interest in contributing to the development of Zimbabwe.

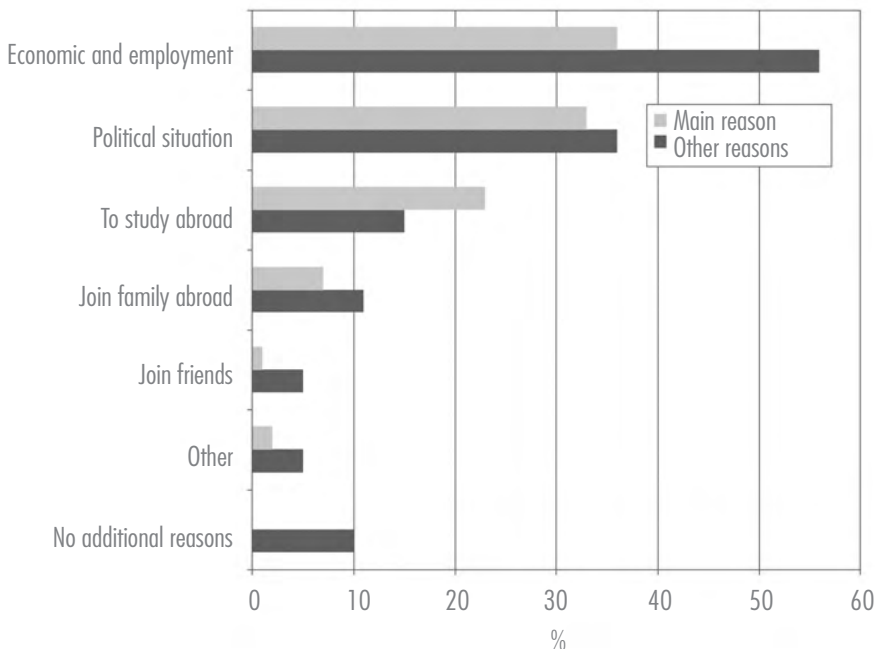
ZIMBABWEANS IN THE UK

There is no sampling frame available of Zimbabweans in the UK. The study therefore used snowball sampling; this is a technique for locating respondents through referrals among people who share the same characteristics. Multiple starting points from which to snowball were used, following extensive networking through organisations, individuals and different mediums (web, radio, email, word of mouth) that worked with Zimbabweans or had Zimbabwean users or clients. The data was collected between July and September 2004 using self-completion paper and web format questionnaires.¹¹ The web version was very popular; 80 percent of respondents used this format.

Almost two-thirds of the sample were male (64.5 percent) and a third female (35.5 percent). Nearly everyone was born in Zimbabwe (95 percent) and all of those who were not born in Zimbabwe had lived there. Most were relatively recent migrants, reflecting the increase in migration since 2000: two-thirds (65 percent) had last lived continuously in Zimbabwe in 2000 or later. However, a quarter had last lived in Zimbabwe between

1994 and 1999 and 10 percent before 1994 resulting in a long period of continued residence outside Zimbabwe.

Motivations for migration were varied and the sample contained a mixed flow of migrants that included forced and other migrants. The reasons provided for leaving Zimbabwe related most frequently to the economic and political situation there (Figure 6.2). Nearly everyone (90 percent) had more than one reason for migrating, and migration routes were not necessarily indicative of the reasons for migration. People enter the UK in whatever way that they can – student visas, visits to family, on false passports – and then move in and out of categories including the asylum system when necessary or expedient. As a consequence, people on student or working visas might well have strong political motives for migration. For example, 16 percent of those on working visas said that their main reason for leaving Zimbabwe was political while 18 percent whose main reason for leaving related to economic and employment factors were refugees or asylum seekers.¹²



Main reason N = 482

Other reasons N = 486

Figure 6.2: Reasons for Leaving Zimbabwe

At the time of the survey, the largest proportion of respondents were on working visas and a third were either UK or EU citizens or had permanent residence or leave to remain (Table 6.1). In the UK context, like elsewhere, immigration status can serve to include or exclude individuals from rights.¹³ These rights range from access to the regular labour market and social and welfare entitlements, to freedom of movement and freedom from deportation. Immigration status itself is not static as individuals exercise opportunities to move in and out of categories.¹⁴ Nevertheless, those at the margins, particularly asylum seekers and undocumented migrants, are largely excluded from the rights conferred on others.

Table 6.1: Current Immigration Status

	%
Working Visa	27
Permanent Resident or Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR)	19
British/EU Citizen	14
Student Visa	13
Asylum Seeker or Appealing Against Refusal of Asylum Case	10
Undocumented	6
Refugee Status	5
Exceptional Leave to Remain/Humanitarian Protection/ Discretionary Leave	3
Other	3

N=498

Not surprisingly, there was a relationship between immigration status and length of time in the UK. The most recent arrivals, 2000 or later, were either on visas (74 percent on student and working visas had arrived in 2000 or later) or had refugee status, a humanitarian status or were going through the asylum process or appealing against a decision on their case (80 percent). In contrast, 60 percent of those with British/EU citizenship or permanent residence had been in the UK since 1999 or before.

Historically, Zimbabweans clustered in a few towns and cities. The introduction in 2000 of the policy of dispersal of asylum seekers who arrived spontaneously and needed help with accommodation resulted in a much greater geographical spread. At the time of the survey, 46 percent of respondents were living in London. Due to dispersal,

immigration status was a definite factor in determining area of residence. Only 22 percent of asylum seekers and 21 percent of refugees and those with humanitarian protection were in London. Though not everyone would choose to live in London, dispersal on a no-choice basis for asylum seekers can and does limit access to job and social networks and also allows fewer opportunities to move to areas where there is employment.¹⁵

AFTER MIGRATING

A skills audit carried out by the UK Home Office found a high level of pre-migration qualifications, fluency in English and professional employment among Zimbabwean refugees.¹⁶ In this research, nearly everyone (97 percent) arrived in the UK with a qualification and among those with a qualification, 43 percent were educated either to degree or post graduate level. A further 21 percent had a Diploma in Higher Education.

More than half of the Zimbabweans in the study had obtained a formal qualification since living in the UK (54 percent). The levels of qualifications achieved were very high. Among those with a UK qualification, more than a quarter (27 percent) had a certificate, diploma or professional qualification while 69 percent had a degree or higher. In fact, 22 percent had a Masters degree and 6 percent had a Doctorate. There was a clear element of academic progression among many of those who had obtained a qualification in the UK. For example, 69 percent of those who arrived in the UK with a degree and had obtained a qualification in the UK had a post-graduate level qualification and 20 percent had a certificate, diploma or professional qualification.

Citizens and those with permanent residence were much more likely than refugees and asylum seekers to have obtained a qualification in the UK (61 percent and 41 percent respectively). Though some asylum seekers would previously have had other statuses that enabled easier access to education, those that did not would be required to pay prohibitive overseas fees. Moreover, asylum seekers have no security of status in the UK and so investing in education would not be a priority given that they might be placed in detention or deported before completing any studies.

Both prior to migration and in the UK, high rates of economic activity and low rates of unemployment were evident (Figure 6.3). Overall, there was little difference in the main activity before coming to the UK and at the time of the survey, though there were

some changes at the individual level. There was a notable increase in the numbers in the UK not working for other reasons and this was largely related to restrictions imposed on asylum seekers due to their immigration status. Prior to 2002, principal asylum applicants were allowed to apply for permission to work after six months in the UK. However, the employment concession was removed. According to the government, this was partly to ensure that the asylum system was not abused by those who were looking to work rather than those with a fear of persecution and partly because it was processing asylum claims more quickly. However, the appeals process can be lengthy.¹⁷ In February 2005, the UK implemented the European Council Directive 2003/9/EC of 27 January 2003 which allows asylum seekers to apply for permission to work if they have not received an initial decision on their asylum claim after twelve months.

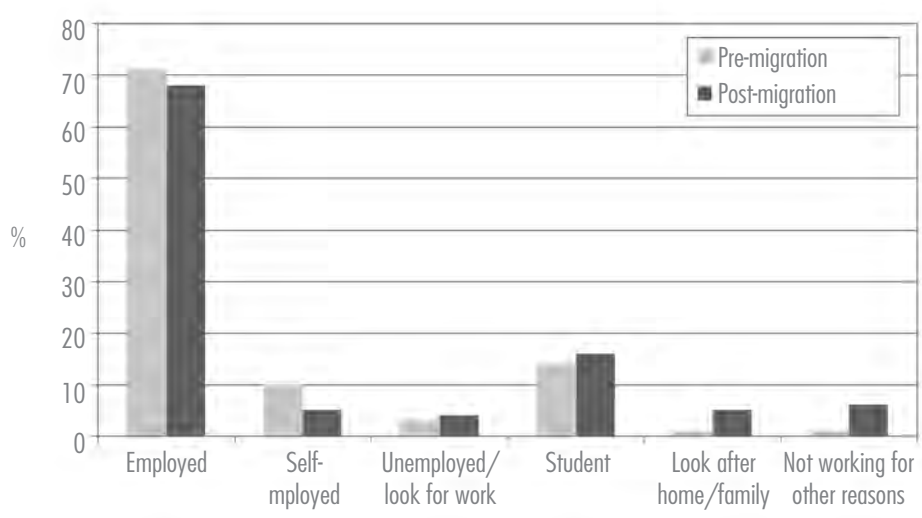


Figure 6.3: Pre- and Post-Migration Employment

Before leaving Zimbabwe, 81 percent of the sample were either employees or self-employed. An additional 9 percent had also worked at some point in the past though not immediately prior to leaving Zimbabwe. A high proportion of those surveyed worked in managerial or professional jobs (Table 6.2). Zimbabweans have higher rates of employment than ethnic minorities, on average, and other black African migrants in the UK.¹⁸

Table 6.2: Most Recent Job Prior to Emigration

	No.	%
Managerial, Including Managing Directors	89	25.4
Teacher	49	14.0
Administration and Clerical	34	9.7
Finance: Clerks, Cashiers, Other	29	8.3
Secretary/PA	20	5.7
Nurse/Sister	17	4.9
Accountant	16	4.6
Engineering	14	4.0
Technicians/Lab Assistant	13	3.7
Lecturer	12	3.4
Health Other (Including Radiography, Pharmacy)	11	3.1
IT	10	2.9
Trades	9	2.6
Retail: Sales, Cashier and Shop Assistant	9	2.6
Consultant/Analyst	9	2.6
Doctor	9	2.6

N = 350

Unlike many other new migrants and refugees to the UK, Zimbabweans are relatively advantaged in the labour market by their likelihood of being fluent in English on arrival.¹⁹ Certainly, language has been identified as one of the main barriers affecting access to the labour market among refugees.²⁰ In theory, therefore, English language fluency, alongside high levels of employability, should translate into easy access to sectors of the UK economy where there are shortages, especially in the professional areas such as teaching and health. However, restrictions on entering professions for those with qualifications from outside the UK mean that in many areas retraining is necessary in order to practice. This is both costly and time-consuming. As a consequence, many who arrive with professional qualifications are not using them in the UK. Half of the respondents said they had skills and experience that they had been unable to use. Despite high levels of economic activity, many Zimbabweans are therefore not working at levels commensurate with their skills and qualifications.

While managed migration policies have enabled some professional people to come to the UK through visa schemes like the HSMP, it has also “had the effect of trapping a pool of skilled people in Britain who are unable to use their skills.”²¹ This is due, in part, to the fact that applications for visas under the HSMP cannot be obtained in the UK. The rise in the numbers of Zimbabweans doing care work is indicative of the trend of skilled people working in lower-skilled employment. Care work has become a niche area of employment and is a sector notable for its exploitative labour market practices.²² The increase in the numbers of nurses in the sample, compared with those who were nurses in Zimbabwe, reflects the availability of nursing bursaries offered until 2002.

Table 6.3: Current or Most Recent Job in the UK

	No.	%
Carer/Care Assistant	58	18.2
Nurse/Sister	49	15.4
All Managerial Including Managing Directors	43	13.5
Administration and Clerical	29	9.1
Teacher	24	7.5
Factory/Production Operative	24	7.5
Consultant/Analyst	21	6.6
Finance: Clerk, Cashier, Other	21	6.6
Engineering	15	4.7
Social Worker	13	4.1
Health Other (Including Pharmacist, Radiographer)	11	3.5
Secretary/Personal Assistant	10	3.1

N = 318

Prior to migration, 49 Zimbabweans had been teachers; in the UK the number had dropped to 24 (Table 6.3). Only half of the 24 practicing teachers in the UK had been teachers in Zimbabwe, so in total just under a quarter of qualified teachers from Zimbabwe were working in the same profession in the UK. Half of those had retrained in Britain and taken a degree or professional qualification. Former teachers were working well below their skills level in jobs that included carers and care assistants, factory and/

or production operatives, domestic workers and waiters. Among those who said that they had skills and experience they were not using, half had a degree, post-graduate or professional diploma or certificate from the UK. Professional skills not being used in the UK included those of teachers, engineers and scientists, skilled trades, the health professions, finance and IT and technical skills. Part of the difficulty experienced by Zimbabweans in the UK labour market are the structural barriers erected by a domestic policy that affects asylum seekers in the short term and longer term, though there are also other barriers. Trying to access the labour market "readily illustrates a stratified system of inclusion and exclusion."²³

For asylum seekers, the removal of the employment concession in 2002 and the imposition of fines on employers who employ people without the correct documentation both present barriers. Moreover, early powers to prosecute employers taking on workers who are excluded from the regular labour market have been strengthened under the 2006 Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act. Asylum seekers often find that initial exclusion from the labour market can, and does, have a longer term negative impact and makes reintegration among professionals at a similar level of employment difficult.²⁴ This study found that those who were, or had at some point been, in the asylum system, regardless of their current immigration status, were much less likely to be working than others (54 percent and 79 percent respectively). Part of the disparity lies in the restrictions placed on asylum seekers entering the regular labour market. Although this did not prevent some asylum seekers working, it did leave them vulnerable to employer exploitation.

Other factors also impact on employment experiences. Regardless of their immigration status and associated barriers, ethnic minorities in the UK are disadvantaged in the labour market due in part to discrimination. Research carried out by the UK government focussing on employment diversity and disadvantage among Britain's ethnic minorities, has highlighted four key areas of concern and disadvantage: employment/unemployment rates, earnings levels, occupational attainment and progression in the workplace, and levels of self-employment. The research identified multiple and complex causes of disadvantage including class, geography, migration patterns and discrimination.²⁵ Though Zimbabweans are active in the labour market, they are certainly disadvantaged in many of the key areas identified by the government research.

Average earnings are low in relation to the long hours worked. The average monthly salary, after deductions, was £1,535. Though there is a significant relationship between hours worked and levels of pay, the very nature of employment is a key factor. Secondary sector jobs are characterized by low pay and long hours and few opportunities for training and progression. Fifty-three percent of the respondents said they work for more than 40 hours a week, and 25 percent for more than 50 (Figure 6.4).

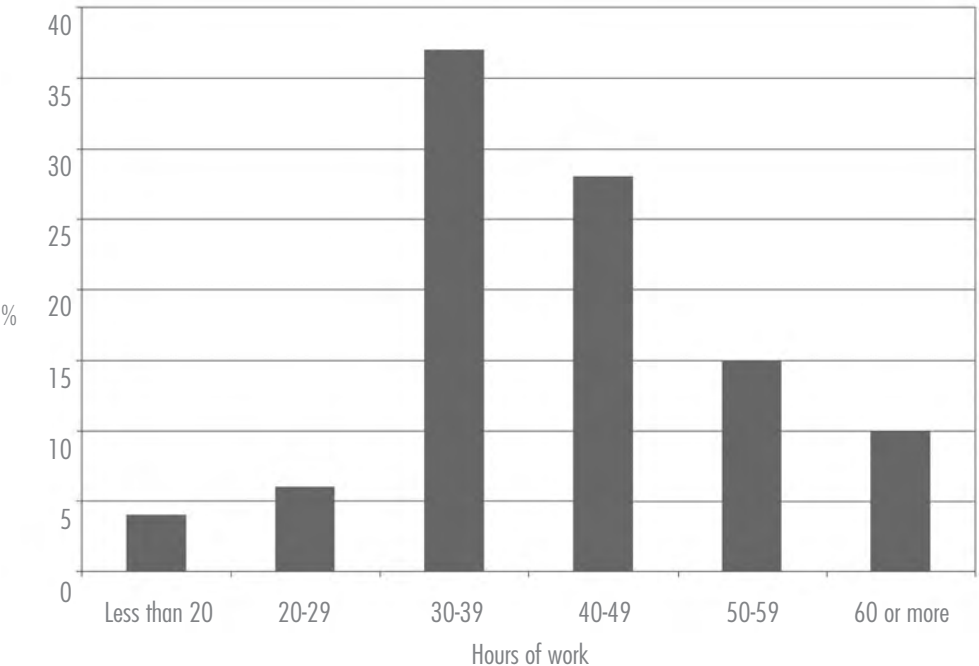


Figure 6.4: Numbers of Hours Worked Per Week

Zimbabweans are clearly not using their skills and qualifications, in spite of capacity building and skills enhancement in the UK through advanced study. There are a number of possible explanations for this including structural barriers and discrimination. However, those who do not see their longer-term future in the UK and/or do not have security of residence, may have more immediate priorities, notably the acquisition of money and other forms of remittances to send to Zimbabwe and elsewhere in the diaspora.

TRANSNATIONAL LIVES

Zimbabweans in the UK are active economic, social and political transnational actors. Migration can form part of a household livelihood survival strategy that brings with it commitments to send remittances to family members in Zimbabwe and elsewhere. Certainly social relations are one of the key determinants of transnational activities, though experiences in the country of residence, especially structural barriers to the labour market, can have a negative impact on transnational capabilities.²⁶ Transnational activities can be observed and measured while capabilities refer to “the willingness and ability of migrant groups to engage in activities that transcend borders.”²⁷ Transnational capabilities are determined, first, by identification with the social, economic and political processes in the country of origin, and secondly, by the practicalities that enable the participation in transnational activities such as the migrants’ social capital and their opportunities in the host country. Host country opportunities can be, and are, impeded by structural barriers like the exclusion from the regular labour market experienced by asylum seekers in Britain and elsewhere in Europe.²⁸

Nearly everyone in the survey (94 percent) had close family members in Zimbabwe and all of those were in regular contact with them. Some 70 percent were in touch at least once a week; telephone calls, emails and text messaging were the most frequent modes of communication. Zimbabweans in the UK are also regular remitters of money and non-monetary support. Eighty percent of respondents remitted money to Zimbabwe and 19 percent elsewhere, indicating an active global diaspora network. Eighty percent of remitters gave supporting family members as the main reason for remitting. Twelve percent were remitting money for the main purpose of buying land or property or investing in business. A minority said that their main reason for sending money was to support friends or make charitable donations. Around three quarters (74 percent) sent non-monetary gifts, and clothes were sent by the largest proportion (87 percent). Books, electrical goods, medicines and used cars were also sent. Additionally, 79 percent provided other forms of support to family and/or friends in Zimbabwe. This included advice about moving, providing accommodation in the UK, help obtaining visas and letting others live in their home in Zimbabwe.

A number of factors influence the propensity to send remittances and other forms of support though transnational capabilities. Close links with Zimbabwe were much more influential than social and demographic factors. Immigration status has a particularly

strong effect (Table 6.4). Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of those who were unemployed, and 31 percent of those not working for other reasons, were still sending money. Clearly, the structural barriers imposed through government asylum policy have had an impact on transnational transactions and affect not only Zimbabweans in the UK but also those in Zimbabwe. Those whose main reason for leaving Zimbabwe was political were less likely to be remitting than others though this did interact with immigration status, notably seeking asylum. Having close family members in Zimbabwe also affected remittance activities, which is not surprising given that most people send remittances to support families.

Remittances are sent regularly with 41 percent sending them every four weeks or less. The amount of money remitted varies, though the amounts sent most often were in the range of £100 to £199. Not surprisingly, there was a direct correlation between the amount of money remitted and income. For example, 60 percent of those earning less than £500 a month send less than £100 a month to Zimbabwe. At the other end of the income scale, only 17 percent of those in the highest earnings bracket of £2,500 or more a month send less than £100. In fact, a third (33 percent) send back £300 or more a month in remittances. For some, especially those on lower incomes and those not working, remittances accounted for a large proportion of their monthly expenses.

In addition to remittances and other forms of support, Zimbabweans in the UK were also involved, to a lesser extent, with social, cultural and political activities in Zimbabwe and elsewhere. Sixty percent participated in activities with people in Zimbabwe and 61 percent with people elsewhere. The most frequently cited activity was internet discussion groups with 30 percent participating in these with people living in Zimbabwe. Seventeen percent were involved in political activities with others in Zimbabwe and 15 percent with people elsewhere. Those who left mainly for political reasons were much more likely than others to participate in transnational political activities.

RETURN MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The focus of UK government policy has been on managed migration, temporariness and return. With regard to refugees there are two key policy areas. First, refugee status is now a temporary status to be reviewed after five years. Refugees will be expected to return home if the situation in the country of origin has improved. Secondly, there is an

Table 6.4: Remittances to Zimbabwe from UK

	Sends Remittances (%)	Sends Non-Monetary Gifts (%)	Provides In-Kind Help and Support (%)
Immigration Status			
UK Citizen	52	61	81
Permanent Resident	85	75	85
Working Visa	90	83	85
Student Visa	94	82	79
Refugee/Humanitarian Protection	88	78	75
Indefinite Leave to Remain	77	75	75
Asylum Seeker	66	60	68
Undocumented	82	86	81
Other	80	50	43
Has Close Family in Zimbabwe			
Yes	82	75	79
No	50	54	78
Main Reason for Leaving Zimbabwe			
Economic Situation/ Employment	85	77	81
Political Situation	73	70	78
To Study Abroad	86	78	80
Other	74	74	60
Main Activity at Time of Survey			
Employed/Self-Employed	81	77	81
Unemployed/Looking for Work	73	53	72
Student	91	77	81
Not Working – Other Reasons	31	39	38
Other	89	88	100

increasing emphasis on return through either voluntary return schemes, which are linked to the notion of the return of human capital for development, or the removal of those in breach of immigration regulations or at the end of the asylum process.²⁹

Nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of Zimbabweans interviewed said that they definitely want to return home and a further 22 percent might want to return. Only 6 percent definitely did not want to return to Zimbabwe in the future. Having a spouse or partner in Zimbabwe was a key factor influencing the desire to return – 88 percent with a spouse/partner and 85 percent with children definitely wanted to return to Zimbabwe to live. Length of time in the UK was also important – the longer people had been in the UK, and the more secure their immigration status as a consequence (citizen or permanent resident), the lower the desire to return to Zimbabwe. While around half of those with UK or EU citizenship wanted to return, 83 percent of asylum seekers and 100 percent of undocumented migrants wanted to return to Zimbabwe.

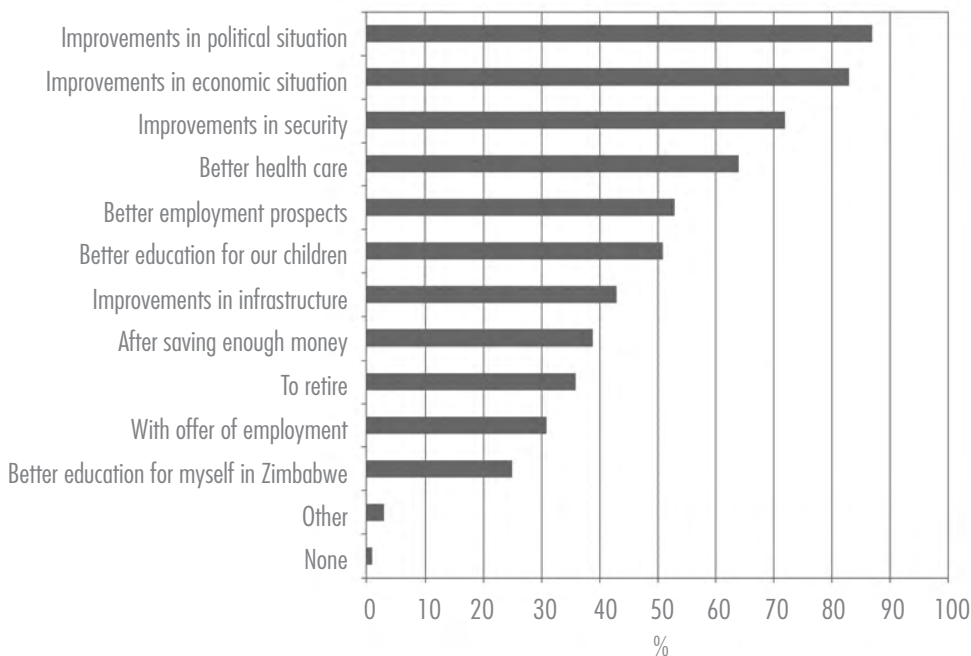


Figure 6.5: Conditions for Return to Zimbabwe

Improvements in the political situation, the economic situation and security were mentioned most often as preconditions for return (Figure 6.5). Health care was a concern for nearly two-thirds, not surprisingly given the prevalence of HIV and the lack of access to antiretroviral drugs in Zimbabwe. Over a third of respondents said that they would like to go back to Zimbabwe to retire. This means that the skills of this group are potentially

lost to Zimbabwe. The group included some very highly educated people as well as people who were working in professional jobs. The minority who definitely did not want to return to Zimbabwe emphasized the political situation, the economic situation and the uncertain future as their main reasons.

Table 6.5: Potential Contributions to Development in Zimbabwe

	%
Investment in business	62
Transfer skills through working in Zimbabwe	44
Transfer skills through training in Zimbabwe	44
Investment in land development	34
Fundraising for projects in Zimbabwe	33
By sending remittances (money)	32
Exporting goods to Zimbabwe	30
Importing goods from Zimbabwe	30
Educational exchanges	28
Sending money for development projects in Zimbabwe with other Zimbabweans in the UK	26
Sending non-monetary gifts	24
Voluntary work in the UK or SA for Zimbabwean issues	23
Political/Greater political involvement	23
Making charitable donations	23
Providing distance teaching (via computers)	20
Investment in infrastructure	19
Voluntary work in Zimbabwe	14
Payment of tax in Zimbabwe	8
Other	2

N = 453

The study also explored whether there was any interest in participating in development-related activities in Zimbabwe. Most people were interested in contributing to development (79 percent); 15 percent said that they might be interested and only 6 percent were definitely not interested. Nearly everyone who did not want to contribute

to development said that it was because of the current political situation. In terms of what contributions they might make, the largest proportion was interested in investing in business (Table 6.5). The types of activities that men and women wanted to contribute to varied. Larger proportions of men were interested in investing in business or land than women while women showed more interest in community-based activities like contributing to charities, fundraising and voluntary work in Zimbabwe.

Though there is clear interest in development-related activities, there are also barriers to contributing. Some of these barriers reflect the situation in Zimbabwe and some are a consequence of the UK asylum and immigration system. Those who were interested in contributing to development were asked what changes, if any, would help them contribute more effectively to the development of Zimbabwe. The factors mentioned most often related directly to Zimbabwe: political changes (65 percent), voting rights (53 percent) and economic opportunities (51 percent) (Figure 6.6). Other factors reflected the circumstances in the UK including having legal immigration status (24 percent), legal entitlement to work (24 percent), having a job (15 percent) and freedom to move (13 percent).

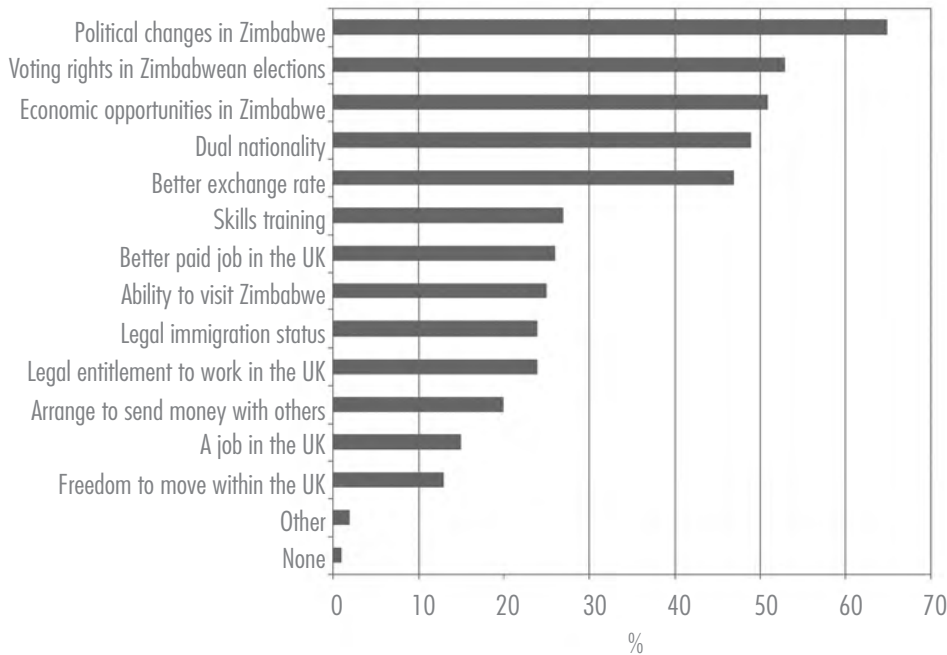


Figure 6.6: Changes That Would Encourage Development Contribution

Not surprisingly, undocumented workers and those in the asylum system were much more likely than others to say that legal immigration status would help them to contribute, or contribute more effectively, to development at home. They were also the respondents who identified legal entitlement to work as a key factor, as did those on student visas who are limited in terms of the numbers of hours that they are legally entitled to work. Those in the asylum system were most likely to state that freedom to move would help them to contribute to development in Zimbabwe. As recipients of assistance through the National Asylum Support Service, they were not able to leave their designated accommodation in dispersal areas without losing their support.

CONCLUSION

Asylum and immigration policy in the UK has become increasingly draconian. Strategies include the imposition of visa restrictions in 2002 in response to the increase in the numbers seeking asylum from Zimbabwe; the removal of the employment concession which allowed asylum seekers to apply for permission to work up until July 2002; increased fines for employers taking on people without the correct documentation; and a focus on removal and voluntary return. Home Office data shows an increase in removals and returns from 9,285 in 2001 to 16,330 in 2006.³⁰ Removals were suspended for “failed” Zimbabwean asylum seekers in January 2002, though they resumed again between November 2004 and July 2005 when more than 200 people were removed. Zimbabweans who have travelled to the UK on false passports from other countries in the Southern African region, including South Africa, are now being returned to those countries.³¹

Zimbabweans in the UK are a well-qualified, highly-skilled group of migrants who have been in the UK for varying lengths of time with mixed motives for migration and variable immigration status which brings a hierarchy of rights and opportunities. The survey data shows that Zimbabweans have been able to build their capacity in the UK by successfully completing high-level educational qualifications. These achievements are not always translated into the labour market with many migrants being underemployed or working in secondary sector jobs with low pay and long hours. The immediacy of needing employment to remit money and other support to families in Zimbabwe undoubtedly plays a part in work strategies as do aspirations to return to Zimbabwe

which could make career progression in the UK less of a priority. However, if and when Zimbabweans do return, the erosion of skills that has taken place – alongside periods of unemployment as a consequence of the asylum system – will impact on their opportunities and effectiveness in contributing to development.

The survey revealed active transnational social and economic lives as well as an interest in contributing to development in Zimbabwe. The propensity to send remittances and provide other support was related to social networks and legal access to the labour market. Citizens who had their immediate families in the UK and had been living in the UK longest were less likely than others to remit or provide support. The structural barriers inherent in the immigration and asylum system were also mentioned as areas of change that would better facilitate contribution to development from the UK. Certainly the UK government needs to reconsider the hierarchy of rights that operates within the current immigration and asylum system if a true commitment to global poverty alleviation, that includes migration as one strand of the strategy, is to be realized.

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KILLING YOURSELF

In Zimbabwe, I was a high-school teacher. I taught for 11 years. I came here because my marriage was broken and I wanted to start a new life. I wanted to go to South Africa but a friend told me it was good financially to come to the UK so long as you worked very hard. I've got two children, a boy and a girl, and my husband was not helping at all. So it was like starting from zero. My friend came first, worked for two months and we communicated on the phone. It's not easy she told me, work and jobs are here, you lie about your experience, for references you use a friend. I resigned from teaching and used my money to buy a ticket. I dressed professionally and when the immigration officer saw me I was given a visitor's visa.

My friend's sister had an agency in Coventry. I had to pay £1200 to register with them to get work. I was living in London so I was permanently at the train station, at a low ebb. I would cry going from one job to the next. I'd work day and night if I could get the work, going from job to job without going home – 112 hours a week. I'd get maybe £350 out of £700. The agency deducted everything. They'd give us a cheque and there was just enough for rent and sending home. We shared a flat, 6 of us, 2 in each room to reduce the rent. We live like squatters. The Pakistani landlords they exploit us. You never get your deposit back. I had a beautiful home back in Zimbabwe but I don't know if I can live in it. I'm still supporting parents back home and my brother died and left two children.

Old people are not treated fairly, especially those funded by social services, but private homes where people have money, they can be posh and get five

star service. I used to go to a home with social service residents. They were only given a small amount of food and only the cheapest brands. They were refused second helpings even when they were hungry. The workers were poorly paid, less than the minimum and they were looking after too many people. The worst job is in a nursing home for dementia patients. They'll say anything, push you about, beat you. I hurt my back with the lifting. Some of the old people will be swinging off you. It's just painful. I can only sit on hard chairs. They're training people for lifting now but it's too late for me. People like me have already ruined their backs.

I don't have a social life. I'm always working. We're in a foreign society. There's no freedom. Life is very tough but you have no choice. I don't like the way I'm living. I'll have to go back but the finance is what is holding me here. There's a lot of money in care work if you kill yourself!



Chapter Seven

Between Obligation, Profit and Shame: Zimbabwean Migrants and the UK Care Industry

JoAnn McGregor

The care industry in Britain faces serious staff shortages, not only of health professionals and social workers, but also of unskilled and semi-skilled carers. Increasingly, new recruits filling jobs at the unskilled end of the care labour market are migrants who have arrived recently in Britain – particularly women. The international influx into care has been on such a scale that, in some societies currently sending migrants to the UK, such as Zimbabwe, caring is cast as iconic of the process of migration itself, and coming to Britain is caricatured as subjection to a dirty, demeaning and feminized area of work. Zimbabweans joke derogatorily of their compatriots “joining the BBC” (“British Bottom Cleaners”), and call care workers and cleaners “bum technicians” or “ma.dot.com” (“dot” implying dirt).¹

Care work is the largest single occupational category among Zimbabweans in Britain.² Carers themselves have diverse attitudes towards the work, and the sector itself is varied: some migrants have found care work a useful stepping-stone to something else, some have found some satisfaction in helping others, and some have managed to accumulate funds to support family in Zimbabwe, or to invest in property and education. Moreover, the care sector has also provided opportunities for migrant entrepreneurs.

However, most Zimbabweans working as carers are stressed and frustrated because they have experienced deskilling and a loss of status, and feel trapped in care work, with little prospect of using their qualifications in the UK. Some feel ashamed by the nature of the work. For men who have gone into caring, these feelings can be heightened by the humiliation of having to do dirty and demeaning "women's" work.

The "care gap" in Britain has been created by a combination of demographic, social and economic changes.³ British people are living longer and having smaller families, and women have been less able or willing to perform "traditional" caring roles themselves, partly because they are working and geographical mobility has meant families are split up.⁴ At the same time, the privatization of local authority residential and home care services has worsened conditions of employment in parts of the labour market, making care jobs unattractive. Although this care gap is increasingly filled by international migrants, their service has often been "invisible," and their contribution is little appreciated.⁵

Public debate over staff shortages in health and social care has been dominated by controversy over the recruitment of skilled health professionals, and has overlooked migrants working in unskilled care jobs.⁶ Though recent legislation has also opened up legal channels for unskilled migrants to come to Britain, these measures have been limited in scope, and have ignored the care sector. The combination of acute labour shortages and restrictionist migration policy has produced a situation where informal recruitment practices in the care industry have flourished, providing opportunities for newly arrived migrants but also allowing for their exploitation. Changing immigration regulations have created a situation where lying about experience, forged documents and false identities are perceived by many as the norm in securing jobs, and unscrupulous employers can profit from the vulnerability of others.⁷ Acknowledging the contribution made by migrants in the care sector would highlight the value of immigration, and allow for the protection of the rights of care workers, including opening up avenues for irregular migrants to regularise their work status and continue to provide much-needed care for others without being denied basic rights themselves.

This chapter is based on semi-structured interviews with 32 black Zimbabwean carers (20 women and 12 men) interviewed in different parts of the UK between September 2004 and April 2005.⁸ Research focussed primarily on London and the South East, but also included other places with significant Zimbabwean communities, such as the

conurbations of the East and West Midlands, and West Yorkshire.⁹ These Zimbabwean women and men came to Britain as part of the exodus of that country's middle and professional classes. In Zimbabwe they had been teachers, accountants, engineers, mechanics, administrators, development professionals, marketing and sales agents, bankers, secretaries, hairdressers, students or had run their own businesses; two had Masters-level qualifications outside the health and social care sectors. All were ambitious to advance themselves and their families through study, to find opportunities to deploy and develop the skills they had brought with them, or to find new careers and routes out of care into more remunerative, stable and high-status work. The majority of the migrants were supporting networks of dependants in Zimbabwe and/or the UK. Only a minority had the security of formal work status; most were on student visas, allowing for only limited hours of legal work. A quarter were failed asylum-seekers or their dependants or were "overstayers."

An understanding of Zimbabweans' perspectives on work in the care sector in the UK requires a consideration of their assessments of opportunities in Britain in relation to changing conditions and prospects in Zimbabwe. Before discussing these assessments, however, it is important to set out the context of changes in the UK care industry, which have led to a greater demand for immigrant carers.

THE UK CARE INDUSTRY

The care industry is a significant employer in Britain, and estimates of the numbers of care workers range between 922,000 and 1.6 million, the overwhelming majority of whom are women.¹⁰ The structure of the industry has undergone major changes over the last 20 years, as a result of privatisation and out-contracting. These changes have been important in spreading temporary work and creating unstable and insecure employment conditions at the bottom end of the job market, contributing to the shortages of carers and the growing importance of migrants. In the past, most formal care jobs were with local authorities, but now the majority of carers work for the private sector. The private sector grew earliest in residential care: it already had a leading role by 1993, when the commitment to privatization was formalised in the National Health Service (NHS) and Community Care Act, and by 2005 provided more than two-thirds of residential care places for adults.¹¹ Home care services have also been privatized over the last decade, such that private care agencies now account for 60 percent of the market.¹² In both resi-

dential and domiciliary care, small "cottage industry" providers predominate, despite the emergence of large corporate players. Many residential homes are still family-run enterprises, though a growing number are purchased simply as an investment, and are run by employed managers and matrons.¹³ The small private care agencies that have emerged to provide home care services have often been set up by former NHS or local authority employees. Given that one of the main barriers to setting up a care agency is access to a supply of carers, this is an area where migrants (many of them qualified nurses or social workers with a history of work in the UK) have found a niche, by tapping into their own social networks of people arriving in Britain desperate for work. Competition is strong and both the larger specialised care agencies and general temporary staffing agencies have tried to target ethnic minority and migrant communities through advertising strategies and by hiring recruiters from particular groups.

The staff shortages that have emerged alongside this process of privatization and in relation to general demographic and social changes have reached crisis levels and are likely to get worse. Vacancy rates for carers are high among all providers and are particularly acute in the independent sector. Turnover rates are also very high, ranging from 7-30 percent, the highest being in the independent sector and among part-time staff.¹⁴ The vacancies partly reflect the deteriorating conditions of work, as local authorities' responsibilities regarding the quality of social care have been undermined by an emphasis on competition and cost-cutting. The process of out-contracting has also undermined workers' conditions. Before the introduction of the minimum wage in 1999, care assistants were among the lowest paid of all occupations in Britain, and remained at the bottom of local authority pay rolls thereafter.¹⁵ A survey of carers in 2003 showed high levels of demoralisation and stress, associated with low pay and instability from outcontracting.¹⁶

The workforce of carers is increasingly dependent on ethnic minorities and migrants. The Zimbabweans in this study perceived their area of work as "dominated by foreigners," particularly the bottom fractions of the market such as temporary jobs, supplied by private agencies. Yet the fragmentation of the industry and the patchy distribution of migrants make it difficult to generalise. As both large and small recruitment agencies in the care business try to tap into particular migrant networks, some small agencies have staff derived overwhelmingly from one nationality, and large agencies can also have concentrations of one particular group in specific places.¹⁷

The structural changes in the industry have contributed to the growth of informal employment practices, and to the spread of labour exploitation, particularly of migrants with insecure status.¹⁸ These practices include subcontracting chains that blur employer/employee distinctions, competing small firms, and highly personalised relations between employer/manager and employee, which create an unclear boundary between “helping” and “work,” particularly where jobs are location-specific and employers can double as landlords (such as care-home owners/matrons or labour recruitment agencies).¹⁹ The supply of potentially exploitable irregular migrants is also important, and is directly linked to restrictionist migration and asylum policies, as in the case of Zimbabweans in the UK.

MIGRATION AND ASYLUM IN THE UK

The numbers of Zimbabweans in the UK grew gradually in the 1990s, accelerating rapidly after Zimbabwe’s economic decline shifted dramatically to economic plunge and political crisis, as the ruling party resorted to a violent and exclusive brand of populist nationalism to try to bolster support in the face of challenges from a new political opposition. The growth of the Zimbabwean population in the UK occurred at a time when Britain was adopting increasingly restrictive measures towards “illegal immigrants” and asylum-seekers.²⁰ Zimbabwe also became the target of specific controls when it topped the Home Office’s list of countries producing asylum-seekers in late 2002. A new visa regime introduced in November 2002 inflated the cost of travelling to the UK and closed down all legitimate routes out of Zimbabwe for those fleeing persecution.²¹ Although it produced the desired drop in UK asylum figures, it did not stop Zimbabweans from travelling to Britain, given the deepening crisis at home and the hostile reaction to the influx of Zimbabweans in the Southern African region. Rather, it drove Zimbabweans into the hands of traffickers and agents, such that increasing numbers arrived in the UK on fraudulent Malawian and South African passports.²²

Forced removals of Zimbabweans from the UK were suspended between late 2001 and late 2004 but resumed in November 2004 in the run-up to the British parliamentary elections, despite the further deterioration of conditions in Zimbabwe.²³ In October 2005, deportations were once again suspended, following a judgement of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal that the act of claiming asylum in the UK was enough in

itself to create a risk of abuse from the Zimbabwean authorities on return. The Tribunal considered evidence that returnees from the UK were systematically handed over at the airport to the Zimbabwean intelligence services for interrogation, along with evidence of incidents of torture and disappearance.²⁴ The suspension of removals from the UK has left many Zimbabweans in Britain in a situation of protracted insecurity and created a growing problem of destitution, as failed asylum-seekers and others were denied the right to work or to claim state support and have had no route to regularise their status. The effect has been to force many Zimbabweans underground, and to seek work by any means.

Although the shift to “managed” migration has allowed many skilled Zimbabweans (and others) to enter the country legally through the new Highly Skilled Migrants Programme and other channels, the heightened barriers against those already in Britain have had the effect of trapping a pool of skilled people in Britain who are unable to use their skills, and have not deterred people from coming through irregular routes. The strategies used by Zimbabweans to regularise their status have gradually been shut down; nursing training, for example, had been a major route by which Zimbabweans in the UK had been able to stabilise life, yet access was curtailed when free bursaries were ended in 2002. New controls are also being implemented on the acquisition of student visas to legalise work, which are likely to force people further down informal routes to hide earnings and identities. Attempts to restrict the numbers of Zimbabweans in the UK are destined to fail, as long as they take no account of Zimbabweans’ circumstances, and as long as conditions in that country do not favour return. Zimbabweans in the UK have had little choice but to continue to hang on however they can, despite stressful and insecure conditions.

BECOMING A CARER

Zimbabweans have entered the care industry on such a scale that the job has become part of national stereotypes of the process of migration to Britain. A student described how: “Back home, they’ll be laughing at you – BBC, that’s what people at home think you do. If they know you’ve been in the UK, they’ll ask you, are you a cleaner or a carer? The assumption back home is that everyone is doing that thing.”²⁵

The carers interviewed in this study were typical of most Zimbabweans, in that they had no experience of care work before they arrived in the UK. As care for the elderly is largely a family concern for black Zimbabweans, encountering homes for the elderly was something new and shocking. Some had heard about them but could not imagine what a nursing home was like and certainly did not envisage themselves doing work that they did not consider to be a proper job and was dirty, cheap and "shameful." Most felt that care for the elderly should be a family matter that was part of a duty children had towards parents. They were highly critical of the way British society treated its elders. Many thought families who put old people in homes were abdicating their moral responsibility by discarding or "dumping" their parents; and that the elderly should be looked after in their children's homes by relatives out of love, not put in an institution and cared for by people they did not know, working for money. Especially initially, some Zimbabwean carers were ashamed and tried to hide what they were doing from relatives and compatriots, even if they also felt they were doing something useful and got some satisfaction from helping others. One woman explained:

I work in a dementia unit in a care home...the work is very demanding... I just accept what I'm doing, there's no choice, we're in a foreign land...in Zimbabwe, this kind of work, it's not really acceptable in our culture. My mother and son, they won't accept it is what I do, I can't tell my son, it might affect him...But I enjoy the work, I want to help people.²⁶

A school leaver who came to join her parents said:

I'm working in care – we all are. There is no option. I never thought I'd do that. I had relatives here when I came and they didn't tell me what they were doing until I came over here myself and was so shocked.²⁷

Others talked of having to swallow their pride and disgust: "I have brought up four children," one mother recalled, "and I found that very difficult, even with my own children, changing the nappies, and all that dirt, it made me feel like throwing up, so how much worse with old ladies."²⁸ But the BBC jobs had become so notorious that, for some, the actuality "was better than the stories I heard about the job back in Zimbabwe."²⁹ Moreover, the possibility of saving was encouraging. A teacher who had sought asylum recounted:

I was just forced to come, I had heard about the bum technicians, but they were sending back £50 a month to their relatives, that was more than you could imagine earning or saving in Zimbabwe, so we didn't care, we didn't care what work it was.³⁰

For men, becoming a carer was doubly shaming, as it meant doing not only dirty and demeaning work, but also what they considered as "women's work." Of the many challenges to notions of masculinity provoked by moving to Britain, including an encounter with different gender norms and the need to re-negotiate domestic gender relations, the feminisation of employment opportunities is particularly important. Some Zimbabwean men refused to work in care. Yet a considerable number did so, even though "you can feel your manhood is undermined," as one male carer noted.³¹ Another man (a father) recalled how in his first job, the matron of the home had taken the men aside to explain what the work was like before they did their first shift:

She prepared us for that. "Doing care work is like being a Mum," she said, "Old people are like children," that's how she explained it, and that made it more acceptable to me, as a father I have helped clean my children at times, even though that's really my wife's job. She warned us it was very hands on and you need to do everything for the person, feed, clean, dress. If that woman hadn't warned me in advance, I would never have finished the first day, but I was lucky, I was given some warning.³²

Yet unskilled or semi-skilled jobs were seen as more readily available in care than in forms of employment more traditionally associated with men. Men who have not been prepared to do care work have not escaped an assault on their masculinity, as they have often been unable to earn as much or as regularly as their wives, which they also described as "humiliating," as it undermined their status and role as "provider" for their families, creating tensions in relationships, and contributing to the many marriage breakups in the Zimbabwean diaspora.³³

Many of the Zimbabweans who went into care work looked back on their early days in Britain and getting their first jobs as a very difficult and stressful time. Some Zimbabweans were able to get their first job a matter of days after stepping off the plane, through personal introductions, or good information on how to register with colleges for student visas, or being directed to agencies or homes that would take new arrivals without experience or papers. But others tried for months to find work before finally

being successful, and became increasingly desperate as the goodwill and budgets of friends ran out. People recalled coming to Britain with nothing more than a single telephone number; some turned up at relatives' homes only to find the address they had was out of date and the relative was working somewhere else; some recalled sleeping rough in train stations; some camped outside the doors of Zimbabwean-run businesses or were hosted by community leaders or churches because they had nowhere else to go.

One young woman came to the UK in 1999, "because my child was in Form 1 and my salary was Z\$10,000 – on that I couldn't afford housing, I couldn't educate my children, nothing." She had no close relatives in the UK, but a friend of a friend organised somewhere to stay. This did not work out as the host was critically ill, so after three days in the UK she was turned out and found herself wandering the streets of Luton. She then looked up a relative of her mother-in-law who said she could stay. She did cleaning jobs until the matron of a nursing home in Welwyn Garden City took her on. She recalled:

The first six months in this country were very hard – no one wants you when you first arrive, you have no employment, no money, you can't get work, you're desperate...When you come you need to register with a college to get your papers, but how when you have no money? No papers means no work – but then that lady, an Indian lady helped me. She offered me £3 per hour or £50 a week – but I was to eat and sleep there in the home. It was half what she paid the others who had papers. That lady trained me to do care work, I got practice at the nursing home, she organised that, I hadn't asked her for work, but just to help me. The matron gave me the money and paid after each week, but then she kept pressing me to get papers, she told me to send £250 to a college that sent off my passport to the Home Office and from there you're OK and you can work. I registered for a computer course, just to get the papers to stay. That lady helped me and welcomed me, she was just helping me so I made sure I got out quickly, not to overstay. I used to refuse milk and sugar in my tea, saying I liked black tea, but that was a lie, just so as not to be a burden. Now I've helped others when they arrive, because I know what it is like to be desperate.³⁴

The fact that so many Zimbabweans have gone into care partly reflects the availability of work, but also the clustering of Zimbabwean social networks around the industry.

As the Zimbabwean community has grown, its members have passed on their experience to newcomers, and many have entered care work through personal introductions or efforts on the part of friends and relatives already working as carers. While close personal family relations with care workers have been important, many Zimbabweans have helped compatriots they scarcely knew find work. A woman in her forties, a former headmistress who came to Britain as a visitor, recalled going into care work thanks to the efforts of other Zimbabwean carers. Her account of getting a job, and subsequently helping others to do so, illustrates the chain of personal contacts, and the convergence of migrants' own agency with the interests of care-home owners or managers facing staff shortages. It also highlights the stress and difficulty of trying to make ends meet through long hours in poorly paid work:

To get a job [when I came in 1998] I had a friend working at a residential home [in Sutton] owned by a certain old lady who lived at the top of the house. They made sure, the workers, that I arrived in the morning and they trained me in how to look after old people. So then they said, "We'll tell the old lady we're going to leave the job, but we've brought someone to replace us." They knew she would be desperate to be told just like that with no notice. She was desperate, she needed someone for night duty. The woman pleaded, "How can you let me down like this. Now it's too late for me to find someone." "But we can recommend a certain girl," they said. So that's how I got the job. She questioned me but I was prepared. So then she gave me so many jobs, just to test, I was so scared. Then on the night shift I was left alone and I didn't know where to start, but I knew I was supposed to change the old ladies. So I left it all night, too scared to know what to do, and then eventually I plucked up courage by 5am as I knew others would be arriving, and the old people were all soaking wet.

My friend and I moved into a flat together, to help each other with the rent...At first I got £3.50 per hour in that Sutton nursing home, it wasn't enough. I lied in order to get nightshifts which are better paid, saying I have a baby I've left with my sister, so I can only do nights. But I was never paid any more, even for nights, so then I looked for other jobs. I went to Epsom, a friend's friend was working in a nursing home there. They were desperate for more staff, so I just came and pretended I had all the papers

– they wanted experience and references. I lied and references aren't a problem, so I got the job, doing days. It was £4.50 per hour, so I was doing better. I got a big bag with a change of clothes, a toothbrush and so on. Then after night duty in Sutton, I'd change and wash so as to appear fresh for the day job. I lived like that for two years, doing double shifts.

One day I saw a woman at the train station, she recognised me, she didn't know me but she could see I was wearing a Zimbabwean cardigan. She asked me for work, but I said "You will need to pretend to be my sister." I wanted to help her, I could see she was suffering and I felt sympathy for her. "I won't tell you where I live," I told her, "but I'll meet you at the station tomorrow." I introduced her where I work as a sister, and they took her on.³⁵

Others helped friends into work by allowing them to use their identity. Some Zimbabwean employers running care agencies complained of how they had to be vigilant, and guard against giving one person a job who seemed legitimate, only to find the new employee had sent a sister or mother to work in their stead.³⁶ One nurse described turning up for a shift in a dementia home expecting to work with a fellow carer she had known for some considerable time, only to find a new person claiming the carer's identity, who looked nothing like the person she was supposed to be and who clearly had no experience in care.³⁷

Although many people managed to get work via personal introductions, another common route into care work has been to sign on with a recruitment agency that has good connections to the Zimbabwean community, sometimes because it is run by Zimbabweans. Agencies in the care sector operate in diverse ways, but information spreads quickly among carers as to which agencies do not ask questions, where it is possible to register with a simple phone call, where it is not necessary to produce the paperwork usually required (references, evidence of UK experience, an address and service bills appropriately addressed, a bank account, a passport with a visa allowing work). Even for those who have the right to work, such as students, employers' demands were difficult to meet, especially initially.

Unscrupulous agencies employing individuals lacking papers exploit their workers, maximising profits by making heavy deductions from staff pay (for training, rent, tax,

National Insurance, and sometimes accommodation) to the point that the worker gets little more than pocket money. Some "bond" workers by withholding pay or confiscating passports, thus giving staff an incentive to stay on the books in order to get what is owed to them; employees who object are simply threatened with disclosure to the Home Office. Several of the Zimbabwean carers interviewed had experience of being "tied in" to an agency in this way when they first arrived. Their attitudes towards this were mixed – many felt that they had at least been able to get work experience, and thus a toe in the door. Much depended on the prospect of getting something better, and the ability to manoeuvre into other work, by regularising their legal status, using someone else's identity to get a better job, or finding an agency prepared to give a better deal for those without papers.

The following account was given by a former primary school teacher, talking of himself and his wife:

We'd heard about the BBC, but we never imagined we'd be doing it...We found it was the only available work, we got into it through desperation... We were introduced by friends, that's how you do it. It took me a month to find work...I started with a very dubious agency, they paid what they felt like, and then at the end of the week they don't honour the agreement, or you'd get half of what you were supposed to get. I went two weeks without pay. You start off just being grateful – I didn't mind being exploited like that at first, just because it was something, you felt you were learning, getting a foot on the ladder. But then after 3-4 months you see that you've been tied in, you want to leave it, but you can't, you're tired out and tied in because they owe you money and they know you don't have your papers. At first, you don't know the environment, you don't know people, and then you find your hours are not being paid just because you don't know, but you don't complain because you need to work. You live in the houses they provide and do what they say because you don't know and you have no choice.³⁸

Working for unscrupulous agencies where housing was not provided could lead to even deeper problems, given the need to pay rent and other bills. One of the Zimbabwean men – a former mechanic working as a carer – was in this situation at the time of the interview. He spoke of his exhaustion, stress and depression at working excessive

hours for which he was not remunerated, getting further and further into debt, and failing to meet his rent to a private landlord in South East London.³⁹ Yet he had not given up on life in Britain, but anticipated moving into other jobs, perhaps outside of London, envisaged studying for degrees, and was planning to bring his family to Britain when his circumstances stabilised, so they too could secure their education. The stress created by such employment practices was immense in itself, quite aside from the additional pressures many Zimbabweans have experienced as a result of the legacies of violence against themselves and their families, the threat of deportation, demands from family at home, and relationships stretched to breaking point.

Zimbabwean diaspora organisations have not mobilised around the issue of labour exploitation in Britain, perhaps because it is seen as “standard practice,” and a pervasive feature of large segments of the British job market, both on the part of small agencies tapping into particular migrant constituencies and among the major recruitment agencies for unskilled, temporary work. Under current legislation in Britain, if abusive employers hiring workers informally are reported, there is no protection for vulnerable and desperate workers, who risk not only losing their job but also detention and deportation. Individuals concerned about their compatriots’ exploitation have preferred to try to direct workers to better employers, or have tried to set up in business to create employment themselves. Since deportations have been suspended, however, there have been demonstrations demanding the right to work for failed asylum-seekers. The exploitation of overseas qualified nurses during their adaptation courses has attracted more attention, yet they are less vulnerable than those entering the unskilled job market informally.⁴⁰

CONDITIONS AND TRAJECTORIES OF WORK

The care industry has absorbed many migrants partly for negative reasons – simply because the jobs are available, and Zimbabwean social networks provide entry. The exploitative conditions of work that many migrants experienced in their first jobs were seen as tolerable because they expected to move into something better. Some made positive comparisons between caring and their experiences of other work. The carers interviewed for this study included people who had moved out of cleaning, supermarket work, security, catering, hairdressing, industrial or warehouse jobs and teaching. They

consistently explained the advantages as "more money and less stress." In care they were able to build up longer hours of more regular work, compared to other areas of unskilled work. In cleaning, warehouse or industrial work, it can be very hard to build enough hours to make ends meet.

Some care jobs also pay better than other areas of unskilled work. One former NGO manager explained: "I can't compare this work to my job back home, it's a cheap job, but the wages are better than other unskilled work – I started off in a supermarket, but the wages were depressing."⁴¹ Another noted, "Yes, it's dirty work and it can be stressful at times, but at the end of the month you're not thinking about the dirt."⁴² A young woman felt care work was "hard" but less stressful than working in an understaffed burger restaurant.⁴³ One former hairdresser switched into care after working for a West-African-run hair salon, where pay had been handed out when the owner felt like it, rather than in relation to the hours she worked.⁴⁴ A teacher recalled her stress working as a supply teacher in South East London: "My aunt advised me, "You should go into care work – look please swallow your pride." She helped me, she was the one who persuaded me, but now I enjoy it, at least compared to the teaching."⁴⁵

The flexibility of care work is also attractive, and mothers and students described it as easier to fit around childcare or study than other jobs. A former teacher, studying for a Master's degree, explained: "Care work is easy to do and you can choose your days. I came here as a student, I go to lectures during the day and I do nightshifts in a nursing home. I never looked into teaching because I couldn't fit that around my studies."⁴⁶

The male carers assessed care work in relation to the feminisation of employment opportunities in Britain. They considered the market for unskilled "men's jobs," such as industrial or warehouse work, to be much tighter and more competitive. Care work could compare favourably because "men's work" was often physically demanding and even if work was available, it was simply not physically possible to increase earnings by working double shifts. A male carer explained: "In a warehouse, you can't do more than a single shift, your body won't allow that, but in care you can work double shifts because the work is lighter."⁴⁷ Another man, who combined warehouse and care jobs elaborated: "In the warehouse they pay more per hour, but at the end of the day those doing caring jobs earn more. You can do more hours in care work. In the warehouse you can earn up to £9 per hour, but you can't work more than 10 hours lifting boxes,

after that you'll be tired as a donkey."⁴⁸ Those without papers also considered industrial jobs to be more vulnerable to immigration sweeps than the fragmented and dispersed care jobs. Men thus had to weigh up irregular and risky work in a masculine environment against the potential for higher earnings through work in a feminised environment. Some men combined care work with other unskilled work, thus keeping a foot in a man's world whilst also maximising their income.

The favourable comparisons between care and other unskilled jobs demand a closer examination of the conditions of work within a very diverse sector. Carers generally preferred working for clients who were more independent rather than in nursing and dementia homes. Men and women alike aspired to move into day centres, or into positions providing support for those with learning disabilities. The carers in this study had almost all moved into work they considered better than their first jobs: they had moved out of situations where they were tied in, to agencies that honoured payments at least of the minimum wage. Many had got out of the "homes that stink, with that smell that stays with you," into homes that provide "five-star service," places that "smell so sweet, you could think it was a hotel."⁴⁹

Most of the Zimbabweans interviewed were working for agencies supplying temporary staff to residential homes. They build up enough hours to make ends meet by signing on with more than one agency, or combine agency shifts with other work (in or outside the care sector). Many complained that their agency would ring at short notice either to cancel or offer shifts; many felt compelled to take whatever they were offered to ensure contracts in the future and to build up enough hours. Some, however, worked for agencies where their "temporary" placements were relatively stable. Rates of pay varied enormously, as agencies appear to compete both at the bottom and top of the job market. Many of the temporary staff were paid hourly rates on or around the minimum wage for weekday shifts (just under £5), while some earned £8 or more. Carers typically were responsible for their own insurance, though many did not know this, and none had taken out insurance. Most had no benefits such as sick pay or compassionate leave. Many complained about the structure of the industry, particularly that the private recruitment agencies were "money oriented" and cared little for their workforce. They also complained that agencies passed on the costs of training, or provided qualifications that were expensive and sometimes non-transferable between different agencies.⁵⁰

The status of temporary staff could explain some of the problems the Zimbabwean carers described in relation to work in residential homes. They reported situations where managers and matrons overworked temporary staff, sent them to the most difficult clients, criticised them excessively or expected more of them, or allowed different amounts of time for teabreaks and so on. They also complained of friction with the permanent staff. These problems were exacerbated by the division between temporary and permanent staff, often described as racialised, with all the temporary staff being African or other migrants, compared to a predominantly white permanent staff. As one carer noted:

The agency staff where I work, we're all black...It's hard because the permanent staff, they will criticise you for laziness, whereas the permanent staff get away with a lot. They can be relaxing and smoking, but if you're hired through the agency, you'll always be the one sent if something needs doing, and you'll always be criticised, it's like you're a second-class citizen, they make a big deal out of it.⁵¹

Four carers had sustained back injuries while employed as temporary staff in nursing homes, and felt they could not complain about inadequate or broken equipment. Temporary staff also felt reluctant to complain about racism. The main constraint on making the desired transition from temporary agency staff to a permanent job directly employed by a home or local authority was legal status. Some, however, continued to sign on with agencies as a matter of choice. The advantages they listed were that the work was flexible and could be fitted around other work or study, and that the better agencies paid more than the homes.

Conditions of work in the domiciliary care sector were likewise very variable. Some agencies did not cover travel time, and carers spent long periods of wasted time moving between clients. The best conditions of work were described by those working for local authority in-house teams, where there were relatively few migrants. One Zimbabwean woman had secured a part-time job with a County Council, where she was "the only black face." Her conditions – exceptional for the carers interviewed – included good hourly rates, sick pay, insurance, pension and other benefits.⁵² Live-in jobs, where the carer is registered with an agency but works for a private client whilst residing in their home, presented a particular set of advantages and disadvantages. Such jobs were strongly feminised. Live-in jobs allow relatively large sums to be earned quickly, as the care worker's living expenses are borne by the client.

The prospects of rapid earnings, combined with time for study and less arduous working days than in a residential home, were weighed up against the disadvantages of the job, primarily isolation. Such jobs take migrant carers into places where they feel very out of place – rural villages, estates of suburban bungalows in sleepy coastal towns and the like. Other disadvantages included the emotional stress of becoming close to a regular elderly client who subsequently dies. One carer had seen the death of three clients in two years. Live-in carers were exclusively women, either female students who needed to save money quickly by working in the holidays, or middle-aged women who felt less need to meet people, and whose children had left home.

Racism in the care sector is a problem in all these types of work, not only in situations where the boundary between temporary and permanent staff is racialised. All the carers working in residential homes for the elderly had experienced verbal abuse from clients, and many had been told they “did not want to receive personal care from a black person.” Some tolerated this from a colonial generation who were now too old to change their views or were suffering from dementia, but differed on the extent they took offence, or classified such comments as “racism.” Much depended on the attitude of the home management. While a minority of carers felt part of a team and reported ways in which managers and matrons had intervened to reduce or disallow racist abuse from clients, in other instances managers failed to act, or even institutionalised racist practices and attitudes.

One care assistant described how her manager gave black carers all the heavy lifting: “At our work place, we have a “heavy side” which is difficult to work in. All black people are assigned to work in that side. White people are never assigned to work there.”⁵³ Many talked about racism as “indirect,” and felt that, as black people, more was expected of them and they had to work twice as hard as white colleagues to prove their worth. Although all the Zimbabwean carers spoke good English, many reported criticism of their accent and communication problems, especially initially. Many had received insults derived from ignorance about Africa, such as the assumption that everyone lives in mud huts. The personalised relationships in residential care homes made it difficult for carers to make formal complaints about racism. In general, employers in the care sector were compared unfavourably with hospitals, which were said to have better procedures for reporting and handling racism.

The location of work made a difference to accounts of racism in care work. Some Zimbabwean carers felt more comfortable in workplaces and cities where there were a lot of black people or an ethnic mix, rather than in coastal retirement centres or small towns, where they felt both direct and indirect racism were more pronounced. Others, however, described frictions with other black or ethnic minority workers in cities. One carer working for a private domiciliary agency in Birmingham described how her manager gave her "black" clients because she was "black," but that this was a problem for her, as her clients were of Caribbean and Asian origin and looked down on her as an African, insulting her by assuming she had to be taught basic everyday tasks, like how to wash up or how to use a toilet.⁵⁴ Another woman who worked in a dementia home explained: "The old folks, yes they abuse, but they're ill, they don't know what they're doing, they call you "fucking black bastards, fuck off to Africa," but they're ill. The problem I had was with Nigerians and Kenyans...I worked in a section with a Nigerian manager, she was very difficult and refused to give me a reference when I left."⁵⁵

Despite such experiences of institutionalised, direct or indirect racism, there were also occasions when being Zimbabwean, African or black was seen as an advantage. One woman, a former teacher, had got her first job in care because "the manager [of the dementia home] liked Zimbabweans, she said they were hardworking and we had the reputation for never cancelling a shift. Homes like Zimbabweans for that reason."⁵⁶ A Zimbabwean running a small care agency described losing some contracts when the prospective clients realised she was black or specifically requested "local" carers rather than foreigners, but other clients had indicated indirectly that they wanted black or migrant carers, "When a client says "Send us carers who are hard-working," you know what they mean."⁵⁷

In addition to racism, the male carers complained of gender discrimination. One warehouse worker felt that care agencies and homes "did not trust men." He described how he and two male friends had applied to a residential home advertising more than five vacancies, "but they said no, we can't take three guys on in one residential home, not three men staying overnight. So we didn't get the job."⁵⁸ Male carers who had succeeded in getting jobs reported further discrimination at work:

Some homes favour women, a woman can wash a man, but then why can't I wash a female? So they discriminate...Most homes are a female environ-

ment – I was the first man there when I took my job, but until now, all the day shifts are ladies, I can't get those jobs. But if you go to a home where you're grouped with women, they'll say, "That's heavy work, you go," and then they'll say "He's being difficult" if you try to complain.⁵⁹

The excessively long hours that the Zimbabwean carers worked – some sustaining double shifts over extended periods – partly reflected the low hourly rates that they received and their living expenses in Britain, but were also motivated by their responsibility to meet the needs of dependants and to fulfil their own ambitions for study, advancement and accumulation. The carers described "killing themselves with overwork," pushing themselves to the very limit to raise enough money to cover rent and other living expenses in the UK, as well as meeting their obligations to support networks of dependants.⁶⁰

Most were unhappy with their social life in Britain, as anti-social hours, short notice of work and exhaustion allowed little spare time to spend with family and friends. Those with children had to make difficult choices, juggling the need for extra shifts with the necessity to spend time with children; some felt they were not meeting their own standards of parenting. Yet the "sacrifice" of overwork had paid off for many, who had managed to fund studies to further themselves or their children. Some carers had also been able to save enough to invest in property in Zimbabwe, to purchase stands (plots of land in towns) or develop homes. One student doing care work, for example, left Zimbabwe in 2002 "with a two-acre stand and a ten-roomed house at foundation level." She came to the UK both to study and to raise funds to complete the home, which she had done by June 2004. She had built her "dream house, which most people ask me why I built such a big, beautiful and expensive house yet I have no intention of going home permanently in the next four years or so."⁶¹ A former secretary and mother of two teenage children worked as a live-in carer while also unsuccessfully claiming asylum and staying on thereafter. Within a few months of arriving in 2001, she had sent home enough money to replace the family car, but her primary aim was to raise the funds to further her children's education, which she managed to do, sending home the fees for a private school for one, and university education in South Africa for the second.⁶² Another carer was channelling all her spare earnings to her family in the UK, where she had two children at university on courses charged at overseas rates.⁶³

FRUSTRATIONS AND BRICK WALLS

Although some of the carers had managed to manoeuvre themselves into relatively good jobs in the care sector and were using care work to finance their studies or investments, they typically saw the job as a stopgap, or a means to something else. One carer noted: "I'm not going anywhere with this caring job, I don't want to think of it in terms of the future, I'm just doing it to fill in while things are sorted out at home." A second carer agreed, "Yes, for me caring is a stepping stone...a financial step, I'm doing it for economic reasons. People like me are looking to better themselves [through study]." Thus, even the best care jobs were seen as tolerable only in the short term, to lead on to something else.

Most of the Zimbabwean carers in this study felt trapped in temporary care jobs. For some, this was because they lacked access to papers. Those who had been through the asylum system unsuccessfully were in a worse position than those still in the system, on visitors' visas or "overstayers" on student visas, as they had little or no prospect of ever regularising their work status. A male carer – a former banker who had run a foreign exchange bureau – explained:

I came here to build up my education and qualifications so I can go back to banking – I can further my studies in the UK for that. When I got here I joined several agencies, because that's the circumstances here and the work is low...It's so difficult to get the permanent jobs, you need papers. People here would be moving on, but it's the papers, that is always the problem, it's a huge disadvantage, it draws you back, so you just end up staying with the agency. Homes won't take you without the papers, you have offers from the homes of work, but you can't tell them you don't have the papers. The agencies are some sort of a protection in some ways...I think of myself going back to banking, but now I'm helping people and there is some satisfaction in that...if you've made someone smile, you have helped them, then it's fulfilling at the end of the day...I could do more with my life, like go into nursing...but costs and my visa status, they would need to be regularised. You need to satisfy the training colleges of that, so you meet a brick wall.⁶⁴

Most felt there was a lack of opportunities in Britain for professional employment outside the health sector. One of the carers was on the list of Chartered Engineers in Britain,

having registered after completing his transfer course. Yet, holding a student visa, he had not been able to find professional work, as employers would not apply for a work permit on his behalf. He felt unable to return to Zimbabwe to apply from there because of the cost, the fact that his wife had a new baby and they needed to juggle shifts to look after it, and because he had political reasons for not wanting to return to Zimbabwe. He felt the process of applying for work permits from Zimbabwe was risky, and might trap him away from his family. He had also trained as a nursing home manager, but could not secure such work without a work permit. He spoke of becoming dependent on anti-depressants, and despaired of getting the type of work he wanted.⁶⁵

Another frustrated professional – a woman in her late forties – had sold property back home to pay the overseas fees for an MBA, which she had completed. But she had come to the conclusion that there was no future for her in the UK, because she would never be able to use her new qualification. In Zimbabwe and South Africa, before coming to the UK, she had worked in a managerial capacity for large corporations, but in the UK she had joined the care industry after a series of unsatisfactory secretarial, receptionist and debt collection jobs. She was employed on favourable pay and conditions by an in-house local authority team, but it was not what she wanted:

It's very hard moving from a responsible managerial job to low jobs here. If you compare the work, I feel the jobs I have done here have destroyed my self-esteem. I'm destroying the person I know...It's like I've gone right back to the first jobs I did [when I left school]...I've been studying here, working to develop myself, but in terms of the jobs I can get here, I can't stay here. I've done my education over the last few years, but as a person, I feel as I have been going down...I can't see there are opportunities for me. The problem in the UK is getting a reasonable job, a professional job that will advance your career. You can't do that, there are no options for me to further my career here...I can't see myself doing care work for long...It's not me, I can't think of myself doing this sort of job. It's alright, of course, I like old people, and I don't mind helping them, I get satisfaction from that, I enjoy helping and talking to them, but I'd rather do that as something personal that I chose to do, just to help. But not to do it for a salary, it's not right. I can't think of it as a career, as a profession.⁶⁶

Those who had secured work status all envisaged moving out of work as care assistants. Two refugees were looking into training as nurses, a third was exploring social work.

Loss of status was a major problem for all the Zimbabwean carers, as most came from middle-class backgrounds, and had held responsible, professional jobs at home. Many described how painful it was to be "looked on as low by someone who doesn't know that you're doing a job that's beneath you."⁶⁷ A former headmistress, now in care work, elaborated: "When I am at work, people can look at you as if you're low, nothing. Then you have to just keep quiet about yourself and your background. We're ashamed to talk about how we're living, it's painful."⁶⁸

Zimbabwean carers' perspectives on their work and decisions about their careers involved weighing up their circumstances and prospects in Britain with those back home in Zimbabwe. Despite the problems of feeling trapped in undervalued and "dirty" work, most carers did not feel that going back to Zimbabwe was feasible in the short term. The ongoing political repression in Zimbabwe, conditions of hyper-inflation, the humanitarian crisis provoked by mass evictions, the collapse of services, and relatives dependent on remittances for basics such as food, all provided powerful incentives to struggle on in Britain.

CONCLUSION

The transnational calculations made by Zimbabweans in care work suggest that there are differences in the way migrants perceive their work, compared to workers living in more stable circumstances. Although Zimbabweans working in care complained of long hours, they actively sought out as much work as possible in order to meet their transnational obligations and ambitions (regardless of their legal status, or original motivation for leaving Zimbabwe). Their quest for money was often strong enough to overcome the shame of loss of status and a cultural disdain for care work, even for men. Both men and women were highly mobile, and in a short period, most had built up an astonishing catalogue of experience in different parts of the country and in different types of care work. Their ambition led them to accept the work, in order to advance themselves in other ways and to create a trajectory into less "hands-on" jobs, and, if not ultimately out of care, at least into caring in a professional capacity, as social workers or nurses.

Yet the obstacles to moving on and up, or back to Zimbabwe, were increasing, as a result of restrictionist migration policies, constraints on entering other parts of the British job market, and continuing political repression, economic decline and the mounting humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe. The stress created by doing insecure, poorly-paid and low-status feminized work was compounded for some by life on the margins of the law and fear of deportation and for others, who worked legally, by a sense of being trapped without prospects.

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- 9 Major centres of Zimbabwean settlement outside London are Luton, Leeds, Slough and Leicester; there are significant numbers in Manchester, Birmingham and Coventry. However, Zimbabweans in the UK are scattered, partly because of the policy of dispersal of asylum seekers and partly because of the importance of care work, for example, in coastal and other retirement centres.
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NO LIFE AT ALL

We didn't know how things were in the UK before we came, but we thought it would be very different from how we found it. I am a schoolteacher. I tried teaching for three months but then I left. It was in London, primary schools in Peckham. I couldn't take the behaviour, they were very rude. It was supply teaching jobs. The staff were racist and the children would call you all sorts of names, very rude. The approach to teaching is so different. Also I didn't have papers and couldn't get a proper job. You'd be moving from school to school. It was very difficult to get into the system, and very stressful.

Care work is no better than teaching. It's just desperation. I also tried that, but the hours are very few, you only get 3-4 hours a day. There's no future in care work. You just need to use it as a stepping stone, just to move on and up. Hospital work can be better. It's more organized. You can tell management about abuses. In nursing homes they'll just tell you to do it or leave. But I'm not using my brain only my muscles. I can fund my studies by doing extra hours. Accounting would be a better field for me. I'm doing Level 2 accounting right now.

We have no social life. We're always busy. Always thinking of going for a shift. Those who are here have no life. We get very depressed. It's no life at all. We don't talk of going out. It's like a waste of time. What can I do? I'll be losing money when I could be earning. There are all sorts of relations to support back home. The children are back home. I wouldn't want to bring up a child here. But it's very hard having the

kids back home. It's not easy to send money. It can take a week or even a month. You can't trust charities or burial societies. Your money can get lost. We make our plans just in the family.

I thought I'd go back home after 2-3 years but after 6 years I'm still here. It's home here now. If nothing changes I'll still be here in 6 years from now. It's taking too long. The idea was to just work for a few years and then go back home. The life is miserable and we really miss home. Maybe it's the weather. You can't go out, transport is very expensive and we don't visit friends because they'll be working. Everyone is so busy. My behaviour has changed. Now I drink just to leave the stress, just to forget. I never drank at home.



Chapter Eight

Regendering the Zimbabwean Diaspora in Britain

Dominic Pasura

Zimbabweans in Britain display most of the features commonly ascribed to a diaspora such as involuntary and voluntary dispersion of the population from the homeland; settlement in foreign territories and an uneasy relationship with the hostland; strong attachment and connection to the original homeland; and the maintenance of distinct diasporic identities.¹ However, little consideration has been paid to the gendering of the Zimbabwean diaspora experience which runs the risk of normalizing male experiences.² The gendering of the Zimbabwean diaspora offers a lens through which to analyse men and women's migration experience in both the private and public spheres. Taking gender as a process rather than a state, this chapter explores the conflicts and contestations that arise as men and women respond to life in Britain. To what extent, and in what ways, does migration shape gender relations and gender roles in both the private and public spheres of the diaspora? How do men and women respond to new gendered identities in the diaspora? To what extent do public spaces influence the negotiation of gender relations and gender roles within and outside diaspora households?

Life in Britain has forced most Zimbabweans to rethink their social and gendered positions within society, making the diaspora a site of cultural conflicts. The conflicts are manifest at many levels, but they are most visible within diaspora households and at religious and social gatherings. A distinction between private and public patriarchy is useful in teasing out the different sites and arenas in which gender relations are made

and remade in the diaspora.³ Private patriarchy is “based upon household production as the main site of women’s oppression. Public patriarchy is based principally in public sites such as employment and the state.”⁴ In this chapter, the notion of private patriarchy is used to analyse diaspora households, while public patriarchy is employed to analyse political, social and religious diasporic spaces.

The chapter is based upon multi-sited fieldwork among Zimbabweans in Britain that made use of the ethnographic methods of in-depth interviews and participant observation to generate data.⁵ The author conducted 33 in-depth interviews over a period of 12 months from July 2005 to June 2006. In devising the research design, particular attention was paid to the varied geographical contexts of Zimbabwean migrants in Britain. The research reported in this chapter was conducted in three contrasting types of public and private space. First, people’s homes in Wigan provided an opportunity to explore diasporic life in private spaces. Wigan provided access to asylum seekers and refugees, dispersed as part of the UK government’s dispersal policy. Secondly, there are public-private spaces for leisure and socialising where cultural identities are expressed through food, language, music and a sense of belonging; a Zimbabwean pub in Coventry and *gochi-gochi* in Birmingham.⁶ Thirdly, two diaspora church congregations, Forward in Faith Mission International (FIFMI) in Coventry and the Zimbabwean Catholic Church in Birmingham were selected. Diaspora congregations are extensions of Christian churches in Zimbabwe. Church services are conducted mainly in Shona or Ndebele. Services are public spaces for the performance and expression of cultural and religious identities and for enhancing social networks.

REDEFINING GENDER RELATIONS IN THE DIASPORA HOUSEHOLD

The majority of Zimbabweans in Britain are highly educated professionals and belong to middle- and upper-class families in Zimbabwe. All come from a country with a very different set of gender relations, compared with that of Britain. Sihle Dube, a divorced mother of two, contrasted the two in this way:

The Zimbabwean man is an African man, he is used to be the one who brings more money in the house and the woman does all the cooking. The husband is a husband, there aren’t equal partners. Once they were brought here, this equality whereby the woman comes from the job where

she has been working 12 hours, probably she has been working from 8am to 8pm. By the time she arrives home, she is tired and wants to relax. In Zimbabwe we don't do that. In Zimbabwe we both go to work, we come back and the husband picks the newspaper and read it and the woman might go and cook the meal. There are no problems whatsoever but here it suddenly becomes a big, big problem.⁷

In Zimbabwe, although some women are in paid work, they are still expected to carry out all the household duties. It is also common for middle-class families to rely on maids and extended family labour to do household chores. Dube underlined how the re-negotiation of gender relations and roles in the diaspora has become a contested area. Tendai Gatora, an undocumented migrant who got married in the UK and has no children, explained the parallel roles of men and women thus: "Most women in Zimbabwe are housewives and if they work they may be running a shop [...] their role is to look after the husbands. A man is a provider; he is a breadwinner in the home."⁸ Almost without exception, the respondents described the position of women in the family and society in Zimbabwe as inferior to the superior position of men. However, these "traditional customs" are being contested in the diaspora, and some have undergone transformation. What factors influence these changes and how have they contributed to the reconstruction of gender relations?

One of the key findings of this study relates to the economic and social upward mobility of women in contrast with men. The majority of respondents acknowledged that some women "are now the main breadwinners for their families." Steven Mavhondo, for example, is married and has three children:

We have situations where women are breadwinners because probably the wife has got the visa that allows her to work. If you come here and you are a teacher and a nurse, then automatically you are the breadwinner because you have the work permit. But if you come here and you were the Chief Immigration Officer no one can give you that job here, regardless of how powerful you were and how you used to boss your wife, here you have to baby-sit because nobody is going to give you a job.⁹

Fidelis Banga who is married with two children, provided another example: "You see women being the breadwinners; they are supporting their husbands and telling them

they earn the money. They have changed from being housekeepers to being economic players. We have seen women owning houses now.”¹⁰ Some women are now the principal and sole breadwinner and this has brought tensions to some households, prompting the re-evaluation of both marriage and migration by men and women.

In Zimbabwe, the male partner was “expected” to be the main or only breadwinner. Although some women in Zimbabwe are in paid work and make a financial contribution to their households, this happens without challenging prevailing gender norms. The current economic and political crisis in Zimbabwe has undoubtedly eroded the role of men as breadwinners as families seek any means to survive in harsh economic conditions. Over 40 percent of Zimbabwean migrants are now women. Within the diaspora context, most men now play the supporting role because they do jobs that pay less or because employers shun their skills. The majority of Zimbabwean women in the diaspora are in paid work. In most cases, they work as nurses, care-givers, social workers and teachers. The re-negotiation of gender relations and roles in the diaspora cannot simply be attributed to women’s contribution to family income. There is no evidence that men are satisfied with the loss of their pre-migration breadwinner status and the authority that entailed. On the contrary, most of the male respondents in this study had more than one job so that they could earn enough to warrant designation as provider for the family.

Men’s hegemonic masculinity is threatened as more and more women assume financial control. Most of the male respondents referred to the shift in the balance of power in diaspora households when women do paid work. Women’s access to an independent income, which in most cases is more than that of the husband, threatens men’s hegemonic masculinity which centres on being the main provider and decision-maker in the family. Most of the women claimed to have control over how they used their salaries, unlike in Zimbabwe. Florence Tembo said that with herself and her husband, “each person decides how to use his or her own money.”¹¹ This is something that would have been inconceivable in Zimbabwe, where her husband did not even allow her to own a bank account. Bernard Moyo explained that “here women have their own bank accounts and decide what to do with their money.”¹² Moyo was a lawyer in Zimbabwe and he followed his wife, who is in the nursing profession, to the UK. He blamed institutional discrimination for his inability to practice law in the UK.

Because of financial decision-making autonomy, some women are investing in the UK by taking out mortgages. Sihle Dube explained:

In some cases, it is husbands that followed and when the husband followed here, they were staying in the house bought by the woman because she owns the mortgage, and this husband also in terms of immigration he is a dependant on the woman. That caused a lot of marriages to break.¹³

What is significant about this scenario is that women are the primary migrants and their decision-making power within the households has increased, to the extent of buying houses on their own. By contrast, concern with property in Zimbabwe is a common feature among the majority of male black Zimbabweans. Mthokhozisi Ndlovu regarded as “infectious” the extent to which diasporans are “buying houses, housing stands, *kombis* (minibus taxis), lorries and buses in the UK and Japan” and shipping them to Zimbabwe.¹⁴

Within the context of Zimbabwean migration, the issue of who is the primary migrant is also important. The ability to get a visa or work permit significantly impacts on the distribution of power within households. Whereas in the past men dominated migration, women are at the centre of the recent migration to Britain.¹⁵ In cases where women were the primary migrant, it has empowered them to take decisions that they would not have made in the country of origin. The “feminization of migration” is redefining the gender status of men and women in the diaspora. As Mthokhozisi Ndlovu noted:

Women were the first to come and it was only late that men followed. If a man was a manager in Zim Sun (Zimbabwe Sun Hotel) when he arrives, he has to work in the care-giving sector. During the early days, the husband will be left at home with kids while the woman goes for work, clubs and disco.¹⁶

The trailing husband’s dependant label creates an indelible inferiority within men. Hence, changing gender relations cannot be wholly attributed to the fact that more women are working outside the home; other factors such as who was the primary migrant are also important.

The restructuring of gender relations and gender roles in diaspora households has often become the source of significant conflict. Changing gender relations have resulted in marriage breakdowns, men losing their role as head of the family, men returning to Zimbabwe, low-earning husbands assuming double shifts and, for some, the

re-adjustment of gender roles. Although no divorce statistics are available, most respondents concurred that marriages were facing severe strain and some were collapsing. Many diasporic marriages had failed to adjust and were thus breaking up. Rudo Muchineripi, a divorcee, described why he thought Zimbabwean marriages were failing: "Men have had to knuckle down and help out. Where this has not been the case in marriages then divorces have resulted. Marriages are under so much pressure in this country."¹⁷ Fidelis Banga had a similar explanation:

The divorce rate of Zimbabweans in the UK has increased, you bring in your wife today and she starts working and earning and there is problem in the house. The balance of power is shifting [...] many people came with strong marriages but when they are in the UK it's hard to sustain them [...] Migration has destroyed the institution of marriage.¹⁸

What Banga meant by "strong marriage" is undoubtedly the "traditional" marriage of male power and female subordination.

The waning of male authority in diaspora households raises major doubts about the future and viability of conventional Zimbabwean marriage in the UK:

There is no future for a Zimbabwean marriage in the UK. Not at all. You can't stand a marriage in the UK when you are under your wife. If you shout at her she dials 999 and the police will come and tell you that "you are committing an assault" you can be arrested for it. So you have no chance, you aren't the head of the house. You are only the head of the house when it comes to paying the bills, because the bills come in your name and that is the end of the story.¹⁹

Bernard Moyo said he felt that conflict in marriages and the high divorce rate were due to the fact that "women are asserting their rights, having separate budgets, or the women saying you are the men of the house so meet all the bills and the woman enjoying her money."²⁰ As Kandiyoti argues, "different forms of patriarchy present women with distinct "rules of the game" and call for different strategies to maximise security and optimise life options with varying potential for active or passive resistance in the face of oppression."²¹ Some women in the Zimbabwean diaspora may thus be playing the "rules of the game" by insisting that men pay all the bills since they consider themselves the "head of the household."

The absence of the extended family and the lack of proximate kinship ties in the diaspora contribute to the high divorce rate. Extended families and kinship ties are central to the production and reproduction of gendered ideologies in Zimbabwe. For the majority of women, the diasporic context helps them to question basic assumptions about traditional gender roles and relations and consequently enables them to carve out new gendered identities without having to negotiate with extended families. However, the lack of familial space and network ties with other Zimbabweans can create a deep feeling of uprootedness and isolation. The experience of racism and exclusion by Zimbabweans in Wigan, for example, has actually made some marriages stronger, according to at least one respondent:

In terms of those who came here, some of their marriages are even stronger than they used to be back home mainly because you are in the midst of a community which doesn't like you, the only social life I have is that with my wife, thus we tend to bond. Just like if you go into prison when you are two you end up having a stronger bond.²²

Households that feel ostracized or excluded in places of settlement are thus likely to experience a more gradual transformation of gender relations and gender roles.

MALE RESPONSES TO LOSS OF AUTHORITY

The evidence suggests that a "dependent" husband lacks the authority to make major decisions within the family. Migration to Britain has catapulted some women from the confines of the domestic sphere into the public sphere of work. While women have moved significantly into the public sphere, men have moved to a lesser degree into the private sphere, a process that has shaken up men's authority in the household. As Tonderai Ncube noted from his own experience: "Now she is going to work and she is getting £5 an hour and I am getting £5 an hour and now there is nothing I can tell her."²³ In this case, his primary breadwinner role had become less relevant and he was no longer the sole authority. His position within the marriage was thus becoming increasingly insecure. Moreover, he thought that the UK government had also usurped his power to maintain and control his children and family by giving them state benefits, which are directly paid to his wife: "So the government is the hero of my family. What would I say, that's the end of the story." Hence, men's authority and power as head of the family, previously derived from

having access to economic resources and through kinship relations, has been contested and weakened.

Some migrant men who feel threatened, particularly when they are unable to fulfil their expected role as breadwinners, return to Zimbabwe. Farai Chenzira portrayed their predicament as follows: "We have a number of men who have left because their wives were nurses and they were managers of progressive companies back home [...] He would rather remain as a manager there than having [a] woman managing the house as a breadwinner."²⁴ Sihle Dube told the story of how a woman had used the immigration system to prevent her spouse from returning to the UK:

I heard a funny case from Luton where the wife sent the husband home when they were having some problems. When he was there she told the Home Office she doesn't need him anymore and the Home Office took advantage and said, "we are just interested in you the nurse and not your husband" so they blocked him from coming back. He is still struggling to come back because he can't cope in Zimbabwe.²⁵

Many Zimbabwean men work double shifts to compensate for the low wages they get from unskilled jobs. As Tapfumanei Chuma explained:

Imagine a lawyer back in Zimbabwe who was married to a nurse. She today earns more than the husband and sometimes he is not yet working as a lawyer. He is going for the industrial shifts in the manufacturing industry, he is not getting as much as he would have wanted to warrant him as the head of the family. This is destructive if the wife does not consider it properly.²⁶

For him, "proper" consideration consists of the wife accepting her subordinate role in spite of being the main breadwinner. This highlights how the breadwinner roles can be reversed and reconfigure power relations within the household and may even result in marriage breakdown. However, working double shifts can also be seen as a financial strategy to accumulate money as quickly as possible for those with precarious immigration status or to remit home.

There is certainly evidence that migration has meant greater involvement of men in household chores:

The main difference is that my husband helps me to cook and does most of the shopping. I do not think if we were in Zimbabwe he would do the same for two reasons. Firstly, it is most likely that we would have a housemaid. Secondly, peer pressure would dissuade him from doing housework. This has not affected our family negatively because we both work and there is no way I can be expected to do everything without his assistance, therefore it is [...] positive for our family.²⁷

Men here have to adapt to a certain way of life in which they have to learn to do some things they wouldn't have done in Zimbabwe like learning how to cook, wash their own clothes, clean up the house. Whereas in Zimbabwe it's very rare to find a man doing these household chores. Here it's part of our lives; it's something that you have to do.²⁸

Patricia Sibanda, the first respondent, inadvertently reproduced the narrative construction of housework as a female sphere when she described the husband's household chores as "help." Moreover, her admission that the changing gender roles have not affected her family negatively implies that this is not a contested terrain in many migrant households. Tendai Gotori, the second respondent, appeared to accept that the economic demands of life in the UK are a sufficient condition for some sharing of household tasks.

A third male respondent suggested that it had become "almost normal" for men to undertake household chores that were socially constructed as women's roles prior to migration: "In Zimbabwe you knew that there is a woman who changes nappies and diapers, who cooks and when you come here it changes and this may affect [marriage].... It's almost normal that when my wife is seating I just take my son upstairs and change his nappies and diapers."²⁹ Commenting further on this process of "normalization" he observed: "What we just did in Zimbabwe was the marriage thing. So from its infancy, apart from the courtship, the marriage after wedding was only in UK. So it really didn't affect me in anything." The explanation makes a distinction between marriages undertaken in Zimbabwe and in Britain. Implicit in his argument is that marriages entered into in Zimbabwe prior to migration experience a far greater rupture than those carried out post-migration. There is a qualitative difference between the two types of marriage, but in both cases the institution of marriage is going through radical transformation in terms of gender roles and relations.

The reconfiguration of gender relations and roles within the family in Britain is generally welcomed by women. One described the experience of sharing housework with her husband as "liberating [...] to be honest, life in the UK is better for me because my husband sometimes help[s] me with housework when there is too much work for me. He normally cleans the house with a Hoover machine and also does the ironing more than in Zimbabwe. He wouldn't do this in Zimbabwe."³⁰

NEW DOMESTIC RELATIONSHIPS

A significant new phenomenon emerging in the diaspora is the "move-in" household, a form of cohabitation.³¹ Here a man and woman live together without going through Shona or Ndebele marriage customs. Although the institution of marriage in contemporary Zimbabwe has a variety of forms, there are common elements. For the Ndebele and Shona people, for example, the concept of marriage, whether civil or Christian, is primarily a contract between two families.³² The main purpose of marriage is the continuation and growth of the family tree.

In contrast, for the "move-in" household in the UK, marriage is a contract between two individuals. These households are formed for a number of pragmatic reasons that have nothing to do with the extended family. As one respondent explained: "What I know is that men who are here don't marry – they just do move-in. They stay together for four or five years and perhaps have a kid without marrying each other."³³ In the diaspora move-in household, however, the main purpose is not to have children but to increase the economic and social well-being of the individuals concerned. Sihle Dube attributed the phenomenon to people's "immigration status and loneliness."³⁴ Bernard Moyo, who followed his wife to the UK, referred to the practice as "very rare in Zimbabwe but common in this country" and believed that some "move-in to share expenses."³⁵

Dube's reference to immigration status as a reason for "move-in" relates to regularisation if the other person has legal status in the country. The introduction of visas by the UK government in November 2002 hindered the reunification of some families. Forced to live apart, some people in the diaspora resorted to move-in marriages. As Fidelis Banda explained, "I have also seen another phenomenon in which Zimbabweans are living double lives. Some women have the economic means; one has a family here and another husband in Zimbabwe, though both husbands are not aware of this."³⁶

Ndunduzo Nkomo described how men too “have married here even though they have wives back home. Yet other women came to work and failed to bring in their husbands, they have also got married in here.”³⁷ In this sense, the UK marriage is like a move-in, a relationship of convenience, perhaps ephemeral in character.

Gender roles and relations among “move-in” couples are actually more egalitarian than in conventional marriages. Godfrey Vhareta who is in a move-in household, explained:

Both of us go to work and the differences are on what you get and what she gets and how you share your earnings. In Zimbabwe, we would put our resources together but here each does what is good to him or her. No one controls or is head of family anymore as we are all equal.³⁸

In these households, patriarchal norms no longer shape men and women’s understandings of their own position. Migration has resulted in the re-negotiation of gender relations and roles and the reordering of the institution of marriage itself.

The diaspora has also seen a rise in the number of lone parent households. As Farai Chenzira noted: “What I have also seen changing is the strong development of the single parent phenomenon, it is so rampant now.”³⁹ The phenomenon has resulted from two situations. First, lone parent households are a consequence of the increasing separation and divorce rate in the diaspora. Second, there are many couples living in “separate worlds” (one in the UK and the other in Zimbabwe or South Africa) because both were unable to get visas to the UK.

PUBLIC SPACES AND GENDER ROLES

Public spaces in the diaspora are a site for re-affirming “traditional” Zimbabwean narratives. While there are many factors affecting the private (re)formation of Zimbabwean gender roles and relations in the diaspora, these changes are often contested in public spaces such as the diaspora church congregation, the pub and *gochi-gochi*.

What is it in the UK, or among Zimbabweans, that brings them together in religious worship in their own idiom and congregations? The conditions of racial discrimination in the labour market, everyday racism and being defined as outsiders in the UK media all push the migrant group together. They have also developed a desire to create some

form of identity in a multicultural society. The speaking of the Shona language, reading of the Scripture in the Shona Bible, preaching in Shona, singing in Shona accompanied by the *hosho* (a rattle) and African drums provides Zimbabwean women in particular with spiritual and emotional support and a sense of belonging. While the churches create a sense of community and cohesion, they also privilege pre-migration gender relations and roles.

Diaspora church congregations are therefore public spaces in which there is resistance to change in gender relations. Close to the Coventry pub is the Zimbabwean Pentecostal Church, FIFMI. The female-dominated congregation numbers between 60 and 70 people. Most of the women are married and in their early thirties. Although women are more numerous, they only have a supporting role in the running of the church service. They support their husbands when they go to the front, stand beside them when they preach and occasionally are asked to complement what their husband has already said. During the sermon on one field visit, the pastor quoted from Ephesians 5:22-24:

Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of his wife, as Christ is the head of the church, His Body, and is himself its saviour. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands.

Another diaspora congregation researched was the Catholic Shona mass in Birmingham. People come from as far as Walsall and Wolverhampton for the church service. Again, women dominate the congregation of between 70 and 90 people attending the mass. Fewer than 25 men were present on each occasion. Some women, in their late thirties and early forties, wore *Mbuya Anna* and *Mai Maria* uniforms.⁴⁰ They were also selling Shona Bibles and Shona hymnbooks. On one visit, a woman in her fifties, dressed in *Mai Maria* uniform, stood up and started reminding the congregation that they should follow the rules and sanctions of the church, as they knew them in Zimbabwe. Women were not allowed to receive Holy Communion without wearing a scarf on their heads and they were discouraged from wearing skin-tight clothes or mini-skirts when coming to church. "We should do things the way we were doing in Zimbabwe, as genuine Catholics," she said.

Men are at the centre of the hierarchy and organisation of both diaspora churches. These congregations act as cultural reservoirs, not only for religious beliefs and

language, but also for gender roles and relations. Consciously or unconsciously, men use diaspora churches as a means of social control over women as the churches emphasise the importance of “doing things the way they are done back home.” The empowerment of women in the private sphere through paid work, financial autonomy and the fragmentation of marriages, is contested and resisted in the public sphere of diaspora churches that extol Christian values and Zimbabwean “traditions” that situate the husband as the head of the family and the wife as a subordinate. Some women, such as the respondent cited above, accept and reinforce this commitment to preserving the gender “norms” of Zimbabwe. However, the majority of women who attend diaspora congregations are in their thirties and early forties, arguably with no vested interest in retaining the patriarchal family.

The pub is another public gendered space for migrants, albeit a distinctly male one. The owner of the Zimbabwean pub in Coventry said she had invested a lot of money in trying to make the pub family-friendly and attract Zimbabwean women but failed. Some of the products in the pub, such as cigarettes and packets of nuts, had the label, “proudly Zimbabwean.” If women and men have the same interests and preferences, in terms of longing for products such as Zimbabwean music and beer, then why are women underrepresented in the pub?

Most of the male respondents invoked ‘culture’ to explain why the pub remained a male space. As one explained: “I don’t like to bring my wife to the pub or club for that matter. What happens when I am not around? What will prevent her from coming to the pub and having fun? I am not saying she mustn’t have fun but it is just against our culture.”⁴¹ Very occasionally some women visit the pub but only in the company of male friends or husbands. Women are therefore considered by men as the bearers and preservers of culture to the extent that women conform to the “cultural norm” of not going to pubs. However, men reinforce the norm by actively preventing their wives from coming to the pub.

The *gochi-gochi* owner said he occasionally asks women – rather than men – to cook *sadza* for him. This is significant because it extends the domestic “role” of women into a public space. The owner’s actions are predicated on the belief that women are appropriate for certain kinds of work, such as cooking *sadza*. What used to be women’s work in the home is now women’s work at the *gochi-gochi*. For men, *gochi-gochi* and the pub, in particular, are places where their lost manhood is regained and re-imagined. These

spaces give them an opportunity to position themselves and reconstruct their identity in the diaspora by discussing life beyond the diaspora.

CONCLUSION

Migration has led to radical changes in gender relations and roles between men and women in the Zimbabwean diaspora. Men are forced through circumstance to do household work and care for children, a thing they would not have imagined doing in Zimbabwe. For women, migration has narrowed their housework responsibilities and opened up opportunities in the public sphere of work, but they work long hours for low pay. Women now have greater financial autonomy in terms of how they want to use their money. The possession and control of their own income has become a means for the transformation of gender relations within the household. The absence of extended families and proximate kinship ties in the diaspora provides a space for the articulation and shedding of "traditional" gender roles. Most men envisage the changes as a passing phase, believing that they will eventually return home and recover their hegemonic masculinity.

This chapter has shown that the factors that influence the changing of gender roles and relations in the diaspora go beyond women's participation in the labour market and financial autonomy. They also include the egalitarian values, norms and laws in the destination country and immigration status (especially where women are the primary migrants and men have a "dependent" label). All these factors challenge patriarchal gender roles and relations. The re-evaluation of the traditional marriage contract has seen increased domestic conflict, accelerated marriage dissolution, a growth in lone parent households and new forms of partnership marriage (such as the more egalitarian move-in household).

Women have certainly made greater gains in the private domain than in the public sphere, where they continue to experience patriarchal exclusion and control. Diaspora congregations, the pub and *gochi-gochi* are public spaces where men (and older women in particular) resist the changes that are happening within diaspora households. In the public spaces created in the diaspora, men resist changes in the private domain and seek to assert male authority in households through appealing to pre-migration norms, values and practices.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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NOTES

- 1 See D. Pasura, "A Fractured Diaspora: Strategies and Identities among Zimbabweans in Britain" PhD Thesis, University of Warwick, 2008.
- 2 J. Clifford, "Diasporas" *Cultural Anthropology* 9 (3) (1994), p. 313.
- 3 S. Walby, *Theorizing Patriarchy* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990).
- 4 Ibid, p. 24.
- 5 All names in this study have been changed to protect respondents.
- 6 *Gochi-gochi* is a Shona word for barbecue, an event where people gather and spend cash with friends roasting meat and drinking beer.
- 7 Interview with Sihle Dube, 13 April 2006.
- 8 Interview with Tendai Gatora, 5 February 2006.
- 9 Interview with Steven Mavhondo, 11 December 2005.
- 10 Interview with Fidelis Banga, 20 November 2005.
- 11 Interview with Florence Tembo, 22 May 2006.
- 12 Interview with Bernard Moyo, 4 April 2006.
- 13 Interview with Sihle Dube.
- 14 Interview with Mthokhozisi Ndlovu, 29 May 2006.
- 15 B. Mbiba, "Zimbabwe's Global Citizens in 'Harare North:' Some Observations" In M. Palmberg and R. Primorac, eds., *Skinning the Skunk: Facing Zimbabwean Futures* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2005), pp 26-38.
- 16 Interview with Mthokhozisi Ndlovu.
- 17 Interview with Rudo Muchineripi, 15 November 2006.
- 18 Interview with Fidelis Banga.
- 19 Interview with Tonderai Ncube, 4 January 2006.
- 20 Interview with Bernard Moyo.
- 21 D. Kandiyoti, "Bargaining with Patriarchy" *Gender and Society* 2(3) (1988), p. 274.
- 22 Interview with Rutendo Mwanzenyi, 17 February 2006.

- 23 Interview with Tonderai Ncube.
- 24 Interview with Farai Chenzira, 15 December 2005.
- 25 Interview with Sihle Dube.
- 26 Interview with Tapfumanai Chuma, 3 March 2006.
- 27 Interview with Patricia Sibanda, 21 October 2005.
- 28 Interview with Tendai Gatora.
- 29 Interview with Bernard Moyo.
- 30 Interview with Florence Tembo.
- 31 'Move-in' is an expression that has been adopted by Zimbabweans to describe a situation where partners move in and stay together without following any traditional or civil marriage procedures.
- 32 M. Bourdillon, *The Shona Peoples* (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1976); C. Stoneman and L. Cliffe, *Zimbabwe: Politics, Economics and Society* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1989).
- 33 Interview with Margaret Muchaneta, 6 October 2005.
- 34 Interview with Sihle Dube.
- 35 Interview with Bernard Moyo.
- 36 Interview with Fidelis Banda.
- 37 Interview with Ndunduzo Nkomo, 16 November 2005.
- 38 Interview with Godfrey Vhareta, 25 September 2005.
- 39 Interview with Farai Chenzira.
- 40 *Mbuya Anna* and *Mai Maria* are Catholic women's associations for married women.
- 41 Interview with Tendai Gatora.

SURVIVING WELL

I was born in Harare in 1960 and although my parents are both late, my brothers and sisters are all still there. When I lived in Zimbabwe, I was a pre-school teacher for seven years and then I worked as a domestic for a while. I left that and joined as a security guard. Life wasn't rosy as a security guard. Then I learned how to do art and joined the art gallery in Zimbabwe. After a while, I was invited here to South Africa to come and exhibit my artwork, which I did. And then I was invited to a gallery in South Africa where I demonstrated my artwork and again people really liked it. Each time I came to South Africa I would stay for three to six months and then go home again. And each time I came to South Africa, I saw that life was rosy here.

In 1991, I decided to come here to Johannesburg and open my own business. I stay here now with my second husband (who is a South African), three of my own daughters, two adopted daughters from my two late sisters (there are two more in Zimbabwe doing schooling) and my son from my second marriage. So I am looking after eight kids and only two of them are working. I only go back to Zimbabwe about once a year, depending on the situation with my brothers and sisters. Last year my sister was ill so I went home. I send money when someone is ill and they need to go to a doctor or if they need medicine but it's unavailable at home, they send me the prescription and I buy it for them here. These brothers and sisters come back and forth to South Africa so they take groceries back home with them and I help with this. When I have big orders I invite my brothers and sisters for three weeks. They help out and then they take groceries back home.

At first I had a stand at a mall for a while but when the rent went up I couldn't afford it anymore. Now I have a stand at the Sunday craft market at Rosebank. I now have customers all over in America and the UK. I have networks overseas and have travelled to Ottawa to stay with friends and sell all my art. My daughter helped me with that airfare and I'm still in touch with my friends there. The lodges [in South Africa] are all ordering from me as well. I'm working at beefing up the market. I turned our garage into my workshop so that I don't disturb my husband when I work.

I want my relatives in Zimbabwe to survive well. I want my daughters to carry on with my artwork. For the family to be in this world it's through this art. This business of art wasn't really mine. I think it was given by God to say this is my family and this is what I was meant to do. When my daughters are off from their work for the day, they're in the workshop doing art. I'm worried about my daughter who is in boarding school in Zimbabwe. I can't rest if the family back home is suffering.



Chapter Nine

Zimbabwe in Johannesburg

Daniel Makina

Johannesburg has become the major destination for Zimbabwean migrants over the last decade. Although Zimbabwean migrants are increasingly dispersed throughout South Africa, the 2001 South African Census showed that 80 percent of recorded Zimbabweans lived in inner-city Johannesburg. This chapter presents the results of the largest survey yet undertaken of Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa. The survey was undertaken in mid-2007 in three suburbs of inner-city Johannesburg – Hillbrow, Berea and Yeoville – and provides unprecedented insights into the profile, activities and migrant behaviour of Zimbabweans in South Africa's largest city.

A total of 4,654 Zimbabwean migrants (excluding visitors and informal cross-border traders) were interviewed in the study. Convenience sampling was used to identify respondents. While questions may be asked about the representativeness of the sample, its large size and the fact that so many Zimbabweans are concentrated in inner-city Johannesburg means that the results are probably reasonably representative, with some exceptions. Some poorer and unskilled migrant workers are known to cluster in informal settlements around Johannesburg, for example, and they are obviously not represented in this sample.¹ Neither are Zimbabwean farmworkers in the border areas of Limpopo province.² In addition, migration patterns between Zimbabwe and South Africa have shifted since 2001 and the proportion of Zimbabwean migrants living in Johannesburg might well have fallen below 80 percent.

As a result, this study makes no claims to understanding the Zimbabwean migrant population in South Africa as a whole. Rather, it provides an important snapshot of the Zimbabwean population of contemporary Johannesburg. However, many of the findings of this survey about Johannesburg's Zimbabwean population are consistent with a SAMP survey of a national sample of migrants from Zimbabwe undertaken in 2005.³ This provides independent corroboration of the reliability of this survey. In this chapter, where appropriate, comparisons are made between the findings of the two surveys.

MIGRATION NUMBERS AND TRENDS

Migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa for employment has a lengthy history.⁴ However, the numbers have escalated dramatically over the last decade. The Johannesburg survey showed a marked growth in migration after 2000. Only 8 percent of those interviewed had arrived in the city before 1999; the rest arrived after 1999 (Figures 9.1 and 9.2). Between 2001 and 2006, the average annual growth rate for new arrivals was 34 percent.

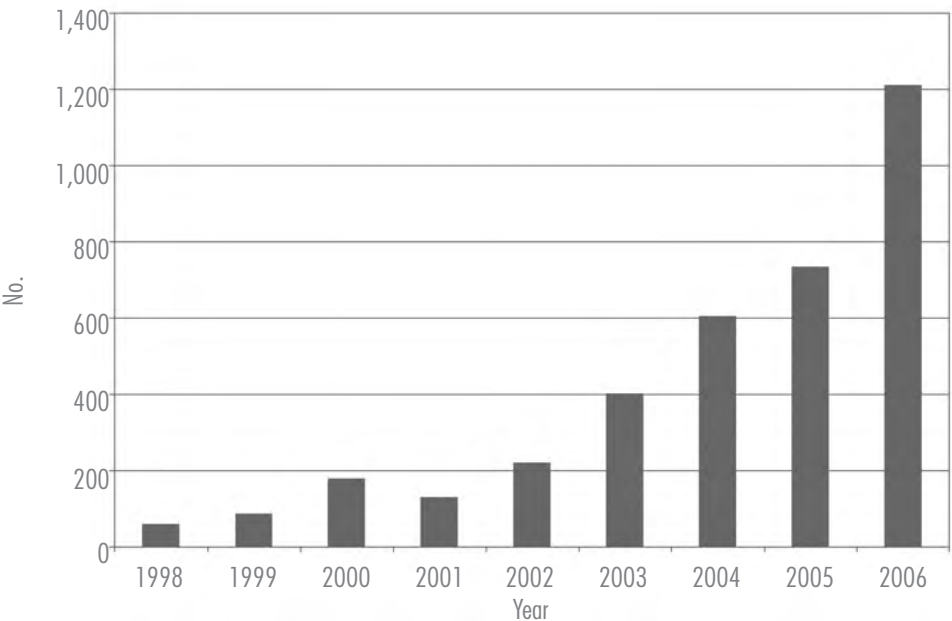


Figure 9.1: Annual Arrivals in Johannesburg

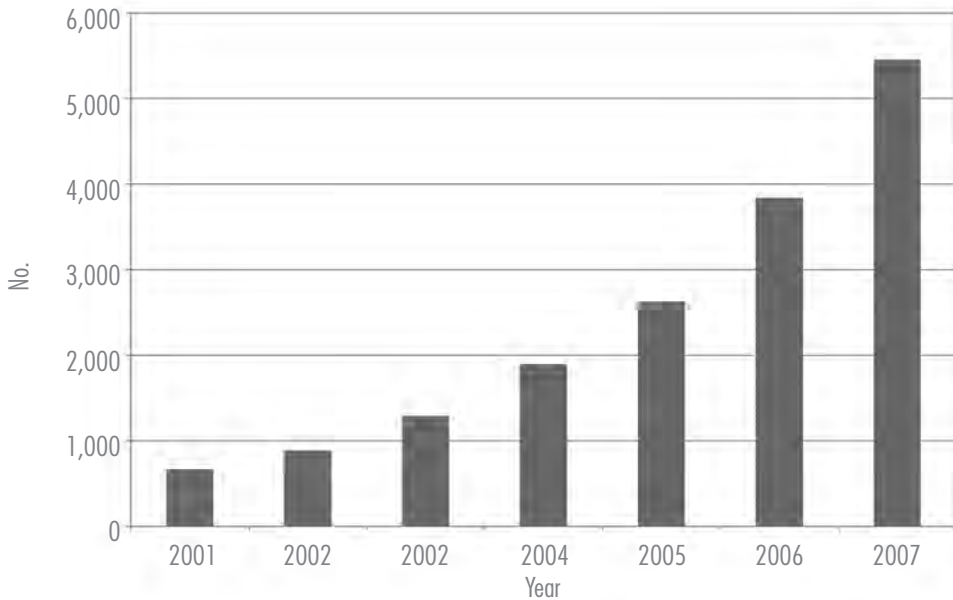


Figure 9.2: Cumulative Zimbabwean Population in Johannesburg

The number of Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa is an issue mired in controversy. Figures of around 3-4 million are commonly cited in the South African and international media, without any real empirical backing. The 2001 South African Census recorded a total of 131,886 Zimbabwean-born people in South Africa. The accuracy of this figure is difficult to determine because census disclosure is voluntary and there are many reasons why irregular Zimbabweans would have had no interest in revealing where they were from. However, the figure is a useful baseline from which to determine the subsequent growth of the Zimbabwean population in South Africa.

In the Census, 104,988 out of a national total of 131,866 (80 percent) Zimbabweans were living in inner-city Johannesburg (Table 9.1). If we assume, first, that the rate of growth of the sample was typical of all Zimbabweans in Johannesburg and, second, that the rate of growth of the Zimbabwean population in Johannesburg was mimicked nationally, then it is possible to make some inferences about the changing numbers of Zimbabweans in South Africa. Using the 2001 Zimbabwean population of South Africa as a baseline, and the annual growth rates of the Zimbabwean population of Johannesburg, it is possible to estimate a figure for each of the years from 2002 to 2007 (Table

9.2). This methodology yields a total Zimbabwean population of just over one million in 2007, well below the fanciful estimates of the South African media and officialdom.

Table 9.1: Location of Zimbabweans in Johannesburg, 2001

Suburb	Male	Female	Total
Berea	22,434	18,236	40,670
Hillbrow	27,025	22,587	49,611
Yeoville	7,728	6,979	14,707
Total	57,187	47,802	104,988

Source: StatsSA.

Table 9.2: Zimbabwean Population in South Africa, 2001-2007

Year	Cumulative Sample Population	Annual Growth Rate (%)	Estimated Migrant Population in South Africa
2001	662		131,886
2002	882	33	175,715
2003	1,283	45	255,604
2004	1,887	47	375,935
2005	2,622	39	522,364
2006	3,832	46	763,425
2007	5,453	34*	1,022,965

*Average of previous 5 years.

ZIMBABWEAN MIGRANTS IN PROFILE

Understanding migrant motivation and behaviour, why one person leaves and another stays, is an extremely complex issue. People rarely migrate for a single reason or without some calculation or comparison between where they are and where they intend to go. In this study, migrants were asked to say why they had left Zimbabwe and could give multiple responses. Their responses were then classified into general groups: economic (including unemployment), political and other (including family reunification). Political reasons for migration were mentioned by 58 percent of respondents. They included

political beatings, persecution, intimidation, torture, human rights abuses, Operation Murambatsvina ("Clear the Filth") and, for older migrants, Gukurahundi (the massacres in Matabeleland in the 1980s). Economic and employment-related reasons for migrating were mentioned by 82 percent of respondents.

Interestingly, the balance between economic and political motivations varied over time. Migrants who arrived in Johannesburg before 2001 tended to give economic conditions in Zimbabwe and the search for better employment as the major reason for migrating. Between 2002 and 2005, political reasons became paramount. From 2005 – in the wake of Operation Murambatsvina, the collapse of the Zimbabwean dollar and rampant unemployment – economic reasons again came to the fore (Figure 9.3).

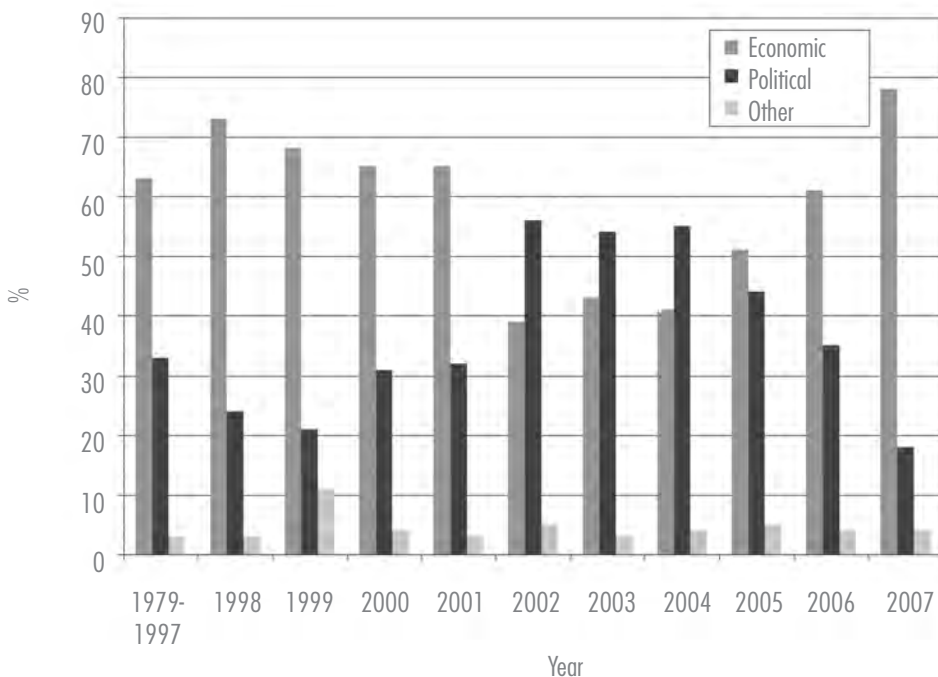


Figure 9.3: Economic versus Political Reasons for Migration

Zimbabwean migrants in Johannesburg come from all parts of Zimbabwe. However, the majority are still from the southern provinces, as has always been the case. Nearly 40 percent of the sample gave Bulawayo as their home and another 30 percent were

from the two southern Matabeleland provinces (Table 9.3). Eleven percent of the sample was from Harare which means that half of the migrants in Johannesburg came from Zimbabwe's two largest cities. In other words, there is significant degree of urban to urban movement in migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa.

Table 9.3: Source Areas of Zimbabweans in Johannesburg

Province	No.	%
Harare	514	11
Bulawayo	1,825	39
Mashonaland Central	73	2
Mashonaland East	66	1
Mashonaland West	88	2
Matabeleland North	565	12
Matabeleland South	779	17
Midlands	359	8
Manicaland	177	4
Masvingo	177	4

N= 4,263

The Zimbabwean population of South Africa has, by most accounts, become more "mixed" and diverse in recent years. In gender terms, the survey showed evidence of the growing feminization of migration from Zimbabwe as more and more women have left in search of work. This pattern is now very different from other Southern African countries where male migration is still clearly the norm. A SAMP survey in 2005 found that for the region as a whole, 84 percent of migrants were male and 16 percent female.⁵ The female proportion varied from country to country – from 5 to 8 percent in the case of Botswana, Mozambique and Swaziland, to 16 percent in the case of Lesotho to 44 percent in the case of Zimbabwe.

One-third of the migrants in the Johannesburg sample who had arrived in the city before 1998 were female, confirming other SAMP evidence that extensive female migration from Zimbabwe certainly dates back at least to the early 1990s.⁶ The Johannesburg sample suggests that the proportion of female migrants in the migration stream continued

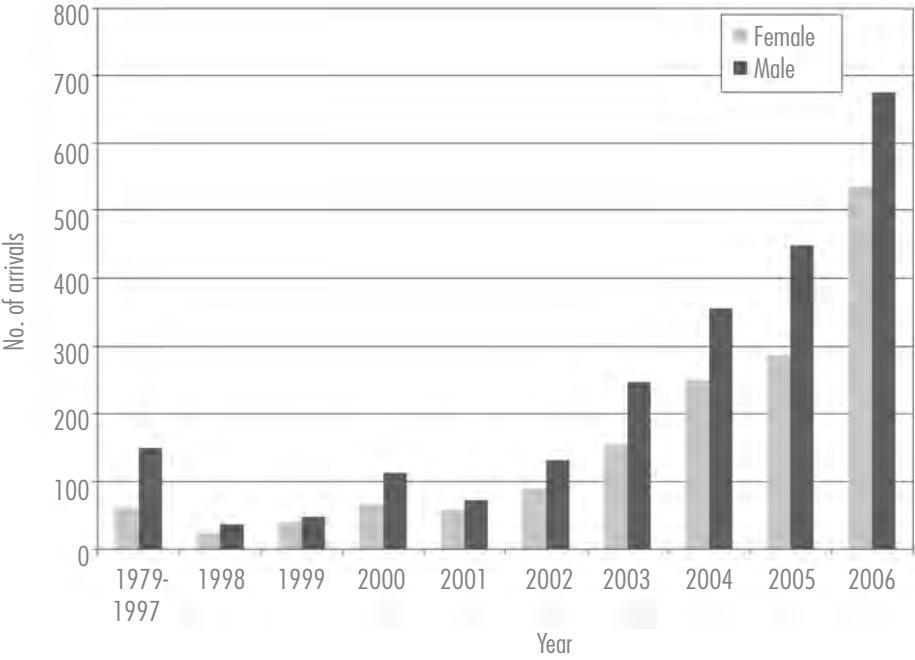


Figure 9.4: Annual Arrivals in Johannesburg by Sex

to increase after 1998, (Figure 9.4). In 2006, 43 percent of the migrants were female. Overall, the gender breakdown of the Johannesburg migrant sample was 41 percent female and 59 percent male.

Table 9.4: Age Profile of Zimbabweans in Johannesburg

Age Range	%
<18 years	1
18-20 years	5
21-30 years	40
31-40 years	40
41-50 years	13
>50 years	1

N = 4,627

The majority of Zimbabwean migrants in the three Johannesburg suburbs were of working age: 80 percent were between the ages of 20 and 40 (Table 9.4). Very few migrants were under the age of 20 or over the age of 50 (1 percent in each case). This might suggest that there is very limited youth or elderly migration from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg. However, the SAMP survey found that 16 percent of Zimbabwean migrants were under the age of 25 and 24 percent were over the age of 50.⁷ This would seem to suggest that other destinations in South Africa (smaller border towns and farms, for example) are attracting more younger and older migrants than Johannesburg.

A gender analysis of the age profile of Zimbabwean migrants shows that female migrants tend to be younger than males (Figure 9.5). Seven percent of female migrants were under the age of 20 compared to only 4.5 percent of males (Table 9.5). Fifty-four percent of female migrants were under the age of 30, compared to only 39 percent of male migrants. At the other end of the scale, 61 percent of male migrants were over the age of 30, compared to only 46 percent of female migrants. And finally,

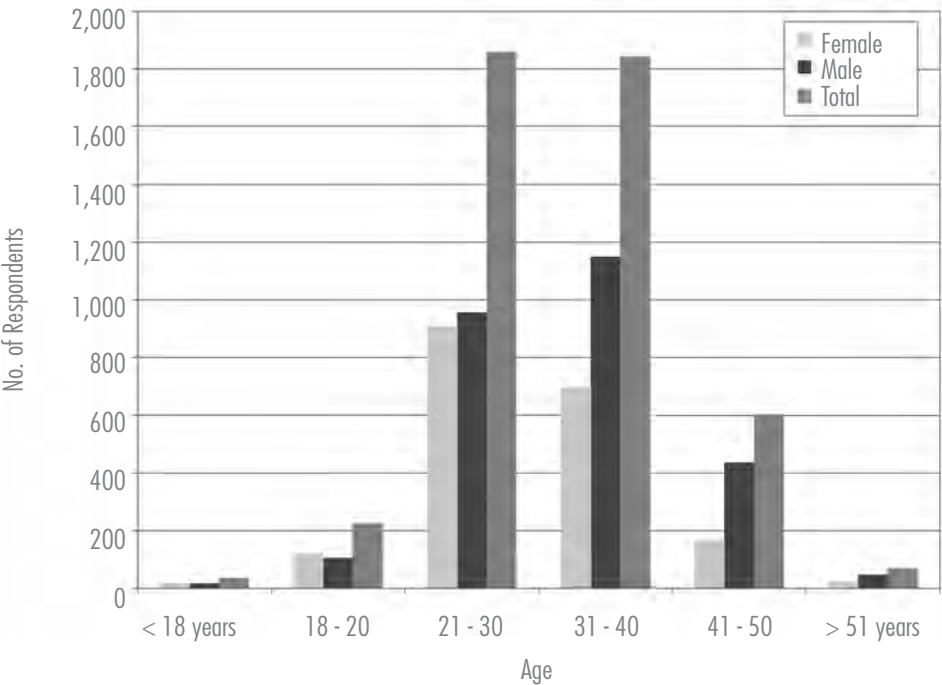


Figure 9.5: Age Profile of Zimbabwean Migrants in Johannesburg

19 percent of male migrants were over 40, compared to only 10 percent of females. Looked at by age group, there were actually more female migrants than male aged 18-20 (53 percent versus 47 percent). As the migrant population gets older, so the proportion of female migrants tends to decline (to only 28 percent for those aged 41-50).

Table 9.5: Age Profile of Zimbabwean Migrants by Sex

Age Range	% of All Females	% of All Males	Total %	% of Age Group Female	% of Age Group Male	Total
<18 years	0.8	0.6	0.7	48	52	100
18-20 years	6.2	3.9	4.8	53	47	100
21-30 years	47.0	35.3	40.2	47	53	100
31-40 years	36.2	42.5	39.8	38	62	100
41-50 years	8.6	16.1	13.0	28	72	100
>50 years	1.1	1.7	1.5	32	68	100

N= 4,626

Labour migration to South Africa was once the preserve of the single, unmarried young adults of the Zimbabwean household. This group constitutes only 36 percent of Zimbabwean migrants in Johannesburg.⁷ The fact that over half of the migrants are married or cohabiting is testimony to the extent to which patterns of migration to South Africa have changed over the last decade. In many Zimbabwean households, anyone who can work is now a candidate for migration whatever their age or marital status. Research in Lesotho shows that a significant proportion of the migrants (especially female) from that country are widowed, divorced or separated. Female household heads are forced to migrate to ensure the survival of the household.⁸ In the case of Zimbabwe, the numbers are not as high but these groups are not absent from the migrant flow. In the Johannesburg sample, 3 percent were widowed and 6 percent were divorced or separated. The diverse marital status of the Johannesburg sample is true of the Zimbabwean migrant population more generally. SAMP found that 32 percent were unmarried, 57 percent were married, 4 percent were widowed and 5 percent were divorced or separated.⁹

The survey turned up little evidence of independent child migration from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg, unlike in other parts of South Africa.¹⁰ This does not mean that there are no adult-accompanied children in the city. Indeed, a significant proportion of the migrants said that they had dependants within South Africa (55 percent). In the past, migrants tended to leave their families at home, and send earnings back to their relatives in Zimbabwe. The 2007 survey suggests that the situation may be becoming so dire in Zimbabwe that whole families are migrating to South Africa.

WORKING IN JOHANNESBURG

The Zimbabwean migrant population in South Africa is relatively well-educated, particularly compared to migrant streams from other SADC countries. For example, 15 percent of all migrants have no education compared to only 0.5 percent of Zimbabweans. Forty-three percent of all migrants only have primary education, compared to just 4 percent of Zimbabweans. On the other hand, 46 percent of Zimbabwean migrants have completed secondary school (compared to a regional average – excluding Zimbabweans – of 25 percent). Twenty-two percent of Zimbabwean migrants have a university or post-graduate degree (compared to a regional average of only 5 percent) and 28 percent have diplomas (compared to a regional average of 6 percent).¹¹

Table 9.6: Educational Profile of Zimbabweans in Johannesburg

Education/Qualification Level	%
University degree	4
Professional qualification (including teachers and nurses)	15
Artisan qualification	3
Post-secondary diploma/certificate	10
Secondary education	62
Primary education/other	6

N= 4,624

In the Johannesburg sample, 62 percent of the migrants had completed secondary school, 15 percent had professional qualifications (including teaching and nursing diplomas) and 10 percent had post-secondary diplomas (Table 9.6). However, only 4

percent had university or post-graduate degrees. This suggests that the bulk of Zimbabwean migrants in Johannesburg are not highly-skilled professionals but rather tend to be white- and blue-collar workers and skilled artisans. Slightly over 15 percent of respondents reported that they had acquired additional qualifications and training in various technical and non-technical fields in South Africa which have helped them to be gainfully employed.

Zimbabweans are employed in a wide range of occupations in Johannesburg (Table 9.7). The security industry was prominent (employing 13 percent of the migrants), was is the hospitality industry (12 percent) and domestic work (11 percent). Others (between 5 and 10 percent of the migrants) were artisans and shop assistants. Five percent were hairdressers and 3 percent health professionals and drivers. Seven percent were working as teachers and only 3 percent were health professionals. The dispersal of Zimbabweans across the urban labour market is indicated by the fact that nearly 20 percent of the sample were employed in “other” professions.

Table 9.7: Migrant Employment in Johannesburg

Profession/Activity	No.	%
Security	617	13
Hospitality/Service Worker	585	12
Domestic Worker/Gardener	513	11
Hawking	442	10
Artisan	413	9
Teacher	324	7
Shop Assistant	279	6
Hairdressing	212	5
Driver	115	3
Health Professional	160	3
Multiple Professions	139	3
Other	855	18

N = 4,654

Almost a third of the migrants were unemployed when they left Zimbabwe. In Johannesburg, around 90 percent have jobs and the remaining 10 percent work in the informal sector. Given the high rates of unemployment in South Africa, it is remarkable that hardly any migrants from Zimbabwe are unemployed or are not engaged in some kind of productive activity. However, there does appear to be some de-skilling with migrants working in positions below their level of training and experience. In Zimbabwe, for example, 16 percent of the sample had worked as teachers. In Johannesburg, only 7 percent were working in that field.

The employment pattern of Zimbabweans in Johannesburg is broadly consistent with the findings of the national 2005 SAMP survey.¹² However, there are some variations. The SAMP survey, for example, found farm and mine-workers – neither of which are in the Johannesburg sample for obvious reasons. There was also a higher proportion of health workers in the SAMP sample, suggesting that though Zimbabwean health workers in South Africa are not working in Johannesburg in great numbers, they are more numerous in other areas of the country. This would be consistent with the fact that Zimbabwean nurses find it easier to obtain employment in small towns and rural hospitals than in the big cities. The specificity of the Johannesburg labour market means that the proportion of Zimbabweans employed in the security industry and in domestic work is higher than in the SAMP sample.¹³

Despite high rates of employment, Zimbabwean migrants in Johannesburg are not particularly well-paid. Over 86 percent of the sample earned less than R4,000 a month (presumably those in skilled and professionals positions) (Table 9.8). Fifty-nine percent earned less than R2,000 a month and 21 percent earned less than R1,000 a month. In other words, being in Johannesburg does not guarantee a high or even a living wage. The cost of living is also higher there. Despite having to survive on meagre earnings, nearly 90 percent of the respondents remit money and/or groceries every month back home to support their families. Only 7 percent of the sample had no dependants in Zimbabwe (Table 9.9). Seventy-two percent had three or more. On average, each respondent remitted R290 per month in cash and/or in kind to their dependants (Table 9.10). This is very similar to the average R260 per month reported to SAMP in 2005.¹⁴ However, there is quite a range of ability to remit. Only 3 percent remit more than R1,000 per month and nearly 40 percent remit less than R200 per month.

Table 9.8: Migrant Earnings in Johannesburg

Monthly Gross Earnings	%
R1,000 or Less	21
R1,001 – R2,000	38
R2,001 – R4,000	27
Over R4,000	14

N = 4,479

Table 9.9: Number of Dependants Supported in Zimbabwe and South Africa

No.	Zimbabwe (%)	South Africa (%)
None	7	45
1-2	21	43
3-4	42	11
5+	30	1

N = 4,632

Table 9.10: Remittances to Zimbabwe from Johannesburg

Monthly Remittances	%
None	11
< R50	2
R50 - R100	7
R101 – R200	18
R201 – R500	40
R501 – R1,000	19
> R1,000	3

N = 4,618

Despite the existence of a sophisticated banking system in Johannesburg, migrants prefer to send remittances home through informal channels. Only 2 percent send funds through official banking channels. Access to financial services for migrants is very limited and 60 percent of respondents reported having no bank accounts. Over 40 percent

of the migrants save through informal savings clubs. Half of the migrants are generally unable to save anything (Table 9.11).

Table 9.11: Migrant Savings

Monthly Value of Savings	% Saving
Zero	50
< R50	7
R50 – R100	11
R101 – R200	11
R201 – R500	14
R501 – R1,000	6
> R1,000	1

N = 4,618

CONCLUSION

Although Zimbabwean migrants may be increasingly encountered throughout South Africa, the majority of the movement over the last two decades has been to Johannesburg. As the 2001 Census demonstrated, the deracialization of inner city Johannesburg has made that area a magnet for migrants from throughout Africa, including Zimbabwe.¹⁵ An estimated 50 percent of the population of the inner-city is foreign-born.¹⁶ Johannesburg, as it always has, still represents opportunity for Zimbabweans – a wide variety of possible jobs, easy geographical access to employment, social and cultural heterogeneity, more limited exposure to the rampant xenophobia of South Africans and a sense of solidarity with fellow Zimbabweans.

The profile of Johannesburg's Zimbabweans presented in this chapter shows that almost half are from Zimbabwe's two largest cities: Harare and Bulawayo. As seasoned urban dwellers, they undoubtedly find it easier than their rural counterparts to negotiate the challenges of surviving in Johannesburg. At the same time, Johannesburg is a particularly dangerous place.¹⁷ Crime is rampant and the inner city is a favourite hunting-ground for the South African police to keep up their "crime-fighting" numbers by arresting irregular migrants en masse.¹⁸ Xenophobia is everywhere and Zimbabweans

were caught up in the horrendous xenophobic attacks of May 2008.¹⁹ Life is made no easier by the fact that wages are low and most migrants have desperate dependants at home waiting for the monthly remittance package to arrive.

Most migrants remain in a kind of legal limbo state. Few can access refugee status in South Africa and only the most skilled can get work permits. Many are undocumented or have used a variety of ruses to acquire documentation. But they are in a larger limbo state as well, very much tied up with the future of Zimbabwe itself. There is considerable speculation about what a change in political regime and economic circumstances in Zimbabwe could mean. Would all those who have left the country return? And under what terms and conditions? The respondents were asked what they would do if “normality” returned to Zimbabwe. Two-thirds said that they would return home, 32 percent to set up a business and 17 percent (optimistically) for employment (Table 9.12). A third said that they would stay in South Africa, but only 6 percent permanently. Twenty-one percent said that they would stay in South Africa for the time being but establish a business in Zimbabwe. In other words, Johannesburg’s large Zimbabwean population are not immigrants who intend to settle, stay and integrate. Most Zimbabweans living in Johannesburg share a common sense of displacement and harbour strong hopes of returning home one day when the conditions that drove them into migration are removed. They are temporary migrants, biding their time.

Table 9.12: Probability of Return Migration

Response	No.	%
Go back and set up business	1,476	32
Stay in South Africa but establish a business in Zimbabwe	990	21
Go back and be gainfully employed	771	17
Go back to undertake social activities via NGOs	507	11
Stay in South Africa but go back to retire	338	7
Go back and settle	298	6
Stay in South Africa	260	6

N = 4,640

NOTES

- 1 Centre for Development and Enterprise, "Immigrants in Johannesburg: Estimating Numbers and Assessing Impacts" CDE In Depth No 9, Johannesburg, 2008.
- 2 Rutherford (in this volume).
- 3 Crush and Tevera (in this volume); D. Tevera and A. Chikanda, *Migrant Remittances and Household Survival in Zimbabwe*, SAMP Migration Policy Series No. 51, Cape Town, 2009.
- 4 L. Zinyama, "International Migration to and from Zimbabwe and the Influence of Political Changes on Population Movements, 1965-1987" *International Migration Review* 24(4) (1990): 748-67; Mlambo (in this volume).
- 5 W. Pendleton, J. Crush, E. Campbell, T. Green, H. Simelane, D. Tevera and F. de Vletter, *Migration, Remittances and Development in Southern Africa*, SAMP Migration Policy Series No. 44, Cape Town, 2006, p. 17.
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- 7 Pendleton et al, *Migration, Remittances and Development*.
- 8 J. Crush, B. Dodson, J. Gay and C. Leduka, "Gender, Migration and Remittances in Lesotho" SAMP Report for UN-INSTRAW, Santo Domingo, 2009.
- 9 Pendleton et al, *Migration, Remittances and Development*.
- 10 Child migration seems more common in the border areas; see International Organization for Migration, *Migrants' Needs and Vulnerabilities in the Limpopo Province, Republic of South Africa* (Pretoria, 2009).
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Ibid, p. 20.
- 13 N. Dinat and S. Peberdy, "Restless Worlds of Work, Health and Migration: Domestic Workers in Johannesburg" *Development Southern Africa* 24(1) (2007): 187-204.
- 14 Ibid, p. 22.
- 15 A. Morris, *Bleakness and Light* (Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand Press, 2000).
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- 18 L. Landau, "Discrimination and Development? Migration, Urbanisation, and Sustainable Livelihoods in South Africa's Forbidden Cities" *Development Southern Africa* 24(1) (2007): 61-76.
- 19 *The Perfect Storm: The Realities of Xenophobia in Contemporary South Africa*, SAMP Migration Policy Series No. 50, Cape Town, 2008.

STAYING IN A CONTAINER

I am originally from Gwanda in Zimbabwe. I was born in 1974 and only did Form Two. I am married to a man from Masvingo. I came here in May 2008, and my husband came here last year. My two sisters also work on this farm. Before coming here, my husband had worked at a farm in Zimbabwe near the border for 8 years. When the money in Zimbabwe became useless, he crossed into South Africa last year. I came here mainly because my husband was not sending me any money whilst I was home. He was spending all the money that he earned on *mahure* [prostitutes.] When I came here, I found him staying with a *hure*. When I arrived here, the woman then ran away from this farm. My husband is no longer working here. He was fired in August because he was caught by the guards here in possession of wild pig meat. He went to Pretoria where he is a security guard.

When I came here, I jumped the border through a crossing point called Chivara, near a farm on the Zimbabwean side of the Limpopo River. I did not meet any *maguma-guma* [gangs who prey on migrants] when I jumped the border. I also did not have a work permit when I came here but now the *murungu* [white man] has given us corporate permits and we went to Musina to get our work permits. I now have my work permit. During that time, many people did not have work permits so the *murungu* allowed people to sleep in the bushes so that they could avoid arrest and deportation by the police or soldiers. The police or soldiers used to come here at night arresting people without work permits and proper identity books. The police and soldiers have now stopped coming here to arrest people. I do

not know why they have stopped maybe they will come during the next orange-picking time.

I work carrying irrigation drip pipes and at times in the weeding and covering of cotton seeds during planting time. I now have seven months working here. I stay in a container. We call these containers *garakara* meaning “you do not have any option but to stay in the container.” The containers are meant for single workers, both men or women. There are eight containers being used as houses. Each container is divided into two rooms by a meshed wired in between. The containers came here in May, when there were many people picking oranges. There was no accommodation for the people and the majority of the orange pickers were sleeping in the bushes.

I earn R400 per month and I work six days per week. I pay R100 for staying in the container per month and this amount includes electricity but none of the containers has any electricity. Each person who stays in the containers or any house pays R100 as rent to the *murungu* regardless of whether you are sharing or not. The R100 is deducted from your pay every month. We buy our food from the Spaza (small shop) here which belongs to the *murungu*. In the container room we are six women. It is very crowded and very hot which is why the *murungu* made that small hole for each room to act as a window.



Chapter Ten

Zimbabweans on the Farms of Northern South Africa

Blair Rutherford

In 2000, SAMP published a path-breaking empirical study of Zimbabwean migrant farmworkers in northern South Africa, a topic that was just starting to receive national and international attention.¹ Based on fieldwork, interviews, policy reviews, and a questionnaire administered to former Zimbabwean farmworkers who were living in southern Zimbabwe, the study was the first of its kind on Zimbabwean farmworkers in the northern South African border zone. It provided important insights into their working and living conditions, and the wider institutional arrangements controlling Zimbabwean farm-workers in northern Limpopo Province. With hindsight, the research was carried out on the cusp of significant changes in the dynamics of Zimbabwean migration to South Africa.

The year 2000 marked the start of an ongoing political crisis viscerally and visibly affecting the country, resulting in what one civic group has aptly called a "meltdown."² The crisis entailed widespread state-supported and perpetrated violence aimed primarily at keeping the ruling ZANU-PF party in power, and a deepening economic crisis resulting in the dissolution of most formal sector jobs and many pre-existing livelihood strategies. A significant result was a sizeable increase in the number of Zimbabweans leaving their country for South Africa, including the border farms in the north.³

This chapter is based on ethnographic research carried out in 2004 and 2005, and a survey administered in 2005 on farms near Musina, the South African border town with Zimbabwe. A comparison with the 2000 SAMP study provides much-needed insight into what has changed, and what has not, in a specific geographic locus of Zimbabwean migration and employment in South Africa. The chapter also examines how changes in migration rates and policies have affected those working on these farms as well as their working and living conditions. The chapter provides temporal depth that is sometimes lost as media outlets and public commentators focus on “signs of a growing migration crisis in the Limpopo province.”⁴

The geographic location for the study is a 70 kilometre-wide belt north of the Soutpansberg range and south of the Limpopo River and between the Mogalakwena River to the west and the Pafuri to the east. Aside from small pieces of the former Lebowa, Gazankulu and Venda homelands that are found in this area, and the town of Musina, most of this land is comprised of commercial farms, parks, and mines. This semi-arid area (with annual rainfall averaging between 350 and 400 millimetres per year) has a relatively recent history of commercial agriculture, with European commercial farms starting to become more established only in the twentieth century through racialized state support to white farmers.⁵ Extensive cattle ranching and maize farming were the main farming activities carried out by white farmers in this area until a change towards more neo-liberal agricultural policies, starting in the 1980s, saw an increasing emphasis on export agriculture such as citrus and horticultural farming.⁶

The growing importance of citrus and horticultural farming led to a growing demand for casual labour, particularly during the harvesting season. Overall, the production processes on these farms require significantly more labour than cattle farming. When the SAMP study was carried out in 1998, many of the seasonal workers came either from Zimbabwe or from the former homeland areas to the south, leading to some conflicts and resentments on the part of the South Africans.⁷ However, as the study pointed out, Zimbabweans had worked on farms in the area since the middle of the twentieth century at least. Most came from the southern part of the country, close to the border with South Africa: “There is no direct correspondence between national territories, cultural boundaries and regional labour markets, and the Limpopo has always been merely a nuisance for generations of work-seekers in the region [of southern Zimbabwe] who have migrated southwards.”⁸

In the 1990s, this area of northern South Africa was designated a "special employment zone," a quasi-legal designation under which the immigration authorities permitted South African farmers to recruit and employ Zimbabwean workers on their farms. But, there have been a number of changes since 2000 in both Zimbabwe and South Africa that have affected Zimbabweans working on these farms. The rising rate of migration, particularly irregular movement, has led to growing media attention, policy discussion, and debates in South Africa concerning Zimbabwean immigrants. Combined with other issues, it also resulted in the formal cessation of this "special employment zone" and a concomitant growing South African government interest in the border-zone of Limpopo Province. As a report in 2007 observed, "government officials in Limpopo have been substantially ramping up their response to informal movements [across the international border with Zimbabwe]."⁹ This chapter situates the transborder livelihood strategies of Zimbabwean farmworkers in northern Limpopo Province within the changing institutional arrangements controlling their presence and employment.

The chapter starts by examining the changing institutional arrangements in the 1990s and 2000s concerning the "special employment zone." It then discusses the findings of research from 2004 and 2005 and compares them with the results of the SAMP study. The analysis focuses on some of the personal characteristics of the farmworkers, migration histories, working conditions, cross-border dependency relations, living conditions, and problems identified by the Zimbabwean farmworkers. This comparison leads to conclusions regarding the situation of Zimbabwean farmworkers in northern South Africa, in light of even more recent administrative changes that were only starting to take effect in late 2005.

ZONE OF EXCEPTION

In 2000, the "special employment zone" for Zimbabwean farmworkers north of the Soutpansberg and south of the Limpopo referred to a system whereby South African and Zimbabwean immigration officials established informal border posts in the gates of the South African border fences.¹⁰ These gates were placed in front of individual farms to enable access to the Limpopo River for irrigation. These "border posts" were only for Zimbabweans working as farmworkers in the designated zone. Movement was controlled by requiring them to have a BI-17 permit that linked them with a farmer who

was a registered employer with their local agricultural union. The Zimbabwean officials collected a fee of \$Z40 (which in September 1998 was worth R20) to issue a permit to leave Zimbabwe. After paying a R2 fee to the farmer on whose property the gate was located, the migrants could renew or receive the BI-17 permit from the South African officials if they had an offer of employment from a farmer or a recruiter working for one. Between 300 and 500 permits were processed during the two days a week that the informal border posts were open.

Such arrangements were found in a few other border zones for farmworkers from different countries such as Mozambique and Lesotho. These localized arrangements were not sanctioned by South African immigration law and were often criticized. As one study noted: "It is clearly unacceptable that farmers should continue to enjoy special status; enjoying rights of access that are denied to other South African employers. The present system is chaotic, confusing and subject to too much local variation and discretion. The need for a transparent and orderly system is paramount. This system should proceed from a central policy vision that is then filtered down to the local level."¹¹

Press reports as well as advocacy by various civic groups (including the land rights NGO Nkuzi Development Association) against the presence of Zimbabwean farmworkers, their abuse by farmers, and the "special status" of these northern borderland white farmers led to growing government interest and a variety of activities relating to the issue.¹² In December 1999, for example, the Department of Home Affairs placed a moratorium on the employment of foreign labour in this area, though farmers continued to hire Zimbabweans. Some of the farmers' unions established a labour recruiting office and agricultural training program in Musina to attract South African workers, though they claimed in 2005 that very few South Africans were recruited that way. The Department of Labour carried out a study in 2000 on the employment of Zimbabweans in this zone and the possibility of employing South Africans, with the aim of "phasing out" foreign and "phasing in" local labour.¹³ On the 94 farms surveyed (out of a total of 210 commercial farms in this zone), 10,111 of the 13,519 workers were Zimbabweans. Focus groups with South African residents led the authors to the conclusion that there were many South Africans willing to work on the farms and replace the "illegal Zimbabwean workers."

Negotiations between farmers' groups, governmental agencies, and Nkuzi also occurred. In October 2001, the Department of Home Affairs declared that it would evict all

of the estimated 15,000 Zimbabwean farmworkers from this zone.¹⁴ Although some farmers' groups in the area supported this move, others were against it and they obtained a High Court interdict to stall the eviction of the workers.¹⁵ The introduction of the 2002 Immigration Act and its 2004 amendment, provided a convenient "loophole" for farmers, who were allowed to apply for "corporate permits" to recruit Zimbabwean workers.¹⁶ Any farmer in South Africa, not just those in the "special employment zone," could now apply for a corporate permit to recruit a specified number of Zimbabweans. To obtain these permits they have to secure an attestation from the Department of Labour that there are insufficient South Africans to meet their labour demand and that they are complying with labour laws.¹⁷ Officially, the so-called "special employment zone" north of the Soutpansberg no longer exists. Although this process was introduced with the 2004 amendment to the Immigration Act, the regulations governing the Act were only passed in the middle of 2005. A Home Affairs official noted in early August 2005 that 89 corporate permits were approved in Limpopo province covering about 11,000 Zimbabwean farmworkers. Before this time, the vast majority of the Zimbabwean farmworkers in this area were not working with any government permits at all.

Most of the Zimbabwean workers employed on the farms up to August 2005 had "farm identification cards" given to them by the farmer. Individual farmers issued these cards with information on them such as the name of the farm, the worker's dates of employment at the farm, his/her photo and Zimbabwean national registration number, and sometimes a fingerprint. Holding such a card often enabled Zimbabwean farmworkers to avoid deportation if they encountered Defence Force soldiers or Home Affairs officials outside the farm or in a raid. Such accommodation was not made for Limpopo farmers outside the northern border zone. Thus the privileges of the "special employment zone" continued to linger for these borderland farmers, even after the official dissolution of this exemption.

ZIMBABWEAN FARMWORKERS: 1998 AND 2005

The farmworker surveys of 1998 and 2005 provide an unprecedented opportunity to examine how events in Zimbabwe have changed the character of migration to the farms of South Africa. The August 1998 SAMP survey was based on a non-probability sample of Zimbabweans living in Beitbridge District, Zimbabwe, within 50 kilometres north of

the Limpopo River, who had worked at least once on a commercial farm in South Africa. The sample consisted of 202 people: 142 males and 60 females. The 2005 survey was administered to 143 Zimbabweans, 79 males and 64 females living and working on farms north of the Soutpansberg in Limpopo Province within 50 kilometres of the Limpopo River. Both were non-probability convenience samples.

The first significant difference in the two groups of farmworkers is in their age profile (Table 10.1). In 1998, the workforce was certainly more youthful than in 2005. The SAMP survey found that just over a third of the workers (37 percent) were 20 years of age or younger. The equivalent figure in 2005 was only 17 percent. In contrast, 37 percent of the workers were over 30 in 2005, compared to only 17 percent in 1998. The proportion of mature workers on the farms had also increased: from 5 percent to 10 percent over the age of 40 between 1998 and 2005.

Table 10.1: Age Distribution of Farmworkers

Age Range	1998 (%)	2005 (%)
15-17	10.9	6.9
18-20	26.2	10.5
21-30	43.1	46.2
31-40	12.4	25.2
41-50	1.0	6.3
51-60	2.5	4.9
>60	1.5	0
N=	202	143

There is also a marked difference in the educational level of the 1998 and 2005 groups. In the SAMP sample, 41 percent had received six years or less of schooling, 44 percent had between seven and 10 years of schooling and 15 percent had more than 10 years. In the 2005 survey, the equivalent figures were 25 percent, 67 percent and 8 percent. Twenty-four percent had passed their O levels and 1 percent their A levels (Table 10.2).¹⁸ Nearly 80 percent of those who had arrived in South Africa after 2000 had at least seven years of schooling (compared to only 53 percent of those who had arrived before 2000.) This clearly suggests that the educational status of those turning

to farmwork increased after 2000, and emphasizes the dramatic rise in the emigration of educated Zimbabweans.¹⁹ A common complaint of Zimbabwean workers was that they were too educated and skilled for farm work. Interestingly, the proportion of workers with more than a secondary education had declined by 2005, perhaps because these migrants now find it easier to secure employment in Johannesburg than they once did.

Table 10.2: Educational Level of Farmworkers

Years of Schooling	1998 (%)	2005 (%)
N/A		1.4
0	13.4	9.1
1-6	27.7	15.4
7-10	43.6	65.7
>10	15.4	8.4
N=	202	143

The marital and dependant profile of Zimbabwean farmworkers changed significantly between 1998 and 2005 (Table 10.3). In 1998, 42 percent of the workers were married and 53 percent had dependants. In 2005, the proportion of married workers had risen to 56 percent and over 68 percent had dependants. In 1998, 40 percent were unmarried without dependants, a figure which had dropped to 24 percent in 2005. Patterns of farmworker migration from Zimbabwe to the farms had clearly changed with greater participation by married people and/or those with more dependants.

Table 10.3: Marital and Provider Status of Farmworkers

Status	1998 (%)	2005 (%)
Married with Dependants	37.1	47.6
Married without Dependants	5.0	9.1
Unmarried with Dependants	15.8	19.5
Unmarried without Dependants	41.1	23.8
N=	202	143

In 1998, most farmworkers came from nearby rural communities on the Zimbabwean side of the border. In 2005, it was clear that they came from a wider range of localities within Zimbabwe. The historical and cultural ties between southern Zimbabwe and South Africa's "Far North" mean that the border is not so much an impediment to international migration as a "nuisance."²⁰ Many workers, as well as the farmers, define these "ties" as largely ethnic, noting the interrelations between Venda communities in southern Zimbabwe and those in northern South Africa. The workers and farmers also said that, until recently, most of the Zimbabwean farmworkers north of the Soutpansberg were Venda. In the survey, respondents were asked to identify their ethnic background. The largest number called themselves Shona (35 percent), and then Karanga (28 percent), which in colonial ethnographic categorizations was grouped as a Shona "sub-ethnicity."²¹ Nineteen percent called themselves Venda, and 18 percent Ndebele. There is not an isomorphic relationship between ethnicity and place in Zimbabwe (despite the attempts of colonial administrators and ethnic mobilizers to establish one). But farmworkers now come from as diverse locales as Mutare and the rural areas in eastern Zimbabwe, Gokwe rural areas in northwestern Zimbabwe, Harare and its townships in northern Zimbabwe, and Hwange in western Zimbabwe.

In 1998, the vast majority of respondents (67 percent) first came to the farm through another worker they knew on the farm. This was still important in 2005, with 33 percent of the workers finding work that way. However, the vast majority now had their first contact with the farm when they arrived asking for work. They then either talked to the foreman, manager or white farmer on the farm itself. The 2005 survey data supports the claim made by farmers and workers that there is little need for recruiters anymore as Zimbabweans come to the farm gate "every day" during picking season from May to August.

Another noticeable difference between the two groups was in the level and type of documentation they possessed (Table 10.4). In 1998, the proportion of migrants who entered South Africa without documentation was over 90 percent. Despite being in the special employment zone, this made them very vulnerable to arrest and deportation when they were off the farm. In 2005, the legal status of farmworkers had improved somewhat. The proportion without documentation had dropped to a third. Over 40 percent of the workers had government permits (probably via the corporate permit system) and 20 percent had permits issued by the farmer to reduce the possibility of arrest. At

the time of the survey, a number of farmers were working through lawyers to acquire corporate permits for their Zimbabwean workers.

Table 10.4: Documents Used to Enter South Africa

Documentation	1998 (%)	2005 (%)
Passport	1.5	0.7
Permit	7.5	40.6
Farmer Document	-	20.2
No Documents	90.6	32.9
No Information	-	5.6
N=	202	143

In 1998, the majority of farmworkers were temporary (often seasonal) workers who did not live on the farms year-round. By 2005, this pattern seems to have given way to a more extensive “permanent” workforce. SAMP found in 1998 that 55 percent of the workers had spent a year or less with their current or past employer and only 18 percent had spent more than 3 years. In the 2005 sample, only 36 percent had worked for a year or less with their current employer while over 46 percent had worked for three or more years. They included 14 percent who had worked for 10 or more years with their current employer (Table 10.5). Males on average had worked for just over four years (49 months) and females for a few months more (51 months).

Table 10.5: Years Worked on Farm

Years	1998 (%)*	2005 (%)
0-1	55.5	25.9
1-2	11.4	9.8
2-3	13.9	11.9
3-5	9.4	14.7
5-10	5.5	17.5
10+	2.9	13.9
Unknown	1.5	6.3
N=	202	143

* For “current or previous employer.”

Finally, the 1998 SAMP study found that most respondents worked mainly with other Zimbabweans with a minority (16 percent) only having Zimbabwean coworkers. The 2005 survey did not ask this question but four farmers provided a breakdown of their workforce. Between 63 and 91 per cent of the total workforce was from Zimbabwe, including 80-100 percent of the seasonal workforce. Of the total workforce of 1,330 farmworkers on the farms, 82 percent were from Zimbabwe. The survey also suggested that 60-70 percent of the total workforce were women, both permanent and seasonal. The SAMP survey had found equal numbers of men and women, suggesting a growing “feminization” of the farm workforce after 2000. As in the earlier SAMP survey, over a quarter (27 percent) of the respondents had worked elsewhere in South Africa, including on at least one other farm in the “special employment zone” in northern South Africa.

Table 10.6: Previous Job in Zimbabwe

	%
Farmworker	11.2
Domestic worker	11.2
General labourer	8.4
Supermarket/Retail	5.6
Driver	4.2
Herding cattle	4.2
Security	3.5
Miner/Gold panning	3.5
Builder	2.1
Teacher	2.1
Office worker	1.4
Other	4.9
None	37.7

N = 143

In 2005, over 60 percent of the Zimbabwean farmworkers interviewed had prior employment experience in their home country. A number talked about once having had “decent” jobs in Zimbabwe. They were employed in a wide variety of occupations, includ-

ing office work, retail, domestic work, and teaching (Table 10.6). Eleven percent had prior experience on farms in Zimbabwe and had possibly been displaced by the white farm seizures that began in 1999. The survey found that most had come to South Africa to work on the farms because they had lost their jobs or had been chased away from work because of their politics and could not find other remunerative employment in the country.

Access to rural-based resources has long been an important source of livelihoods for the majority of Zimbabweans, including those living in cities.²² The vast majority of the 2005 respondents (79 percent) had access to land and a rural home in Zimbabwe, with 43 percent being the main owner of the rural home and the remainder having access through a relative. Of the land itself, 27 percent of those with a rural home had received it on a resettlement scheme (although it is unclear if they received land before or after 2000). A more pertinent figure is that 66 percent of those with access to rural land did not harvest anything in the 2004-5 agricultural season due to drought, lack of inputs, or a combination of factors.

WORKING IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Zimbabwean farmworkers told many harrowing tales of crossing the Limpopo River. They tried to avoid those on the Zimbabwean side of the border called *maguma-guma* who prey on those who are border-crossing (including such violent acts such as theft, rape and assault), while dodging wild animals, army patrols and police roadblocks on the South African side.²³ Many crossed over by foot, often travelling with friends or relatives for, as one worker put it, "the larger the crowd, the less likely the *maguma-guma* will attack you as you seek a way across the river."

One 27-year-old man had worked as a "temporary worker" since finishing his O Levels in 1998 at the Post and Telecommunications Corporation of Zimbabwe, the parastatal that runs the Zimbabwean postal services (amongst other things), in Zvishavane town in south-central Zimbabwe. In early 2005, he lost his job, and in June of that year he and some friends, and a young brother who had been working on a South African farm near "Pietersberg" (Polokwane), jumped the border together. The six of them were split up when they were chased and attacked by nine *maguma-guma* on the Zimbabwean side in the middle of the night as they were nearing the border. After wandering for a few days, he found a job on a farm in the border zone.

The 2005 survey clearly showed that Zimbabwean farmworkers undertake a wide range of occupations on the farms, acting not only as seasonal harvesters and pack-shed workers (who sort the citrus into different grades) but working in middle-level management positions as well (Table 10.7). In 1998, most of the jobs performed by the workers did not require too much specialized training or education; 87 percent of the females and 68 percent of the males carried out harvesting, or other horticultural or field work such as planting or pruning. Only 2 percent of the males were foremen or supervisors and another 2 percent were drivers. In 2005, only 49 percent of the females and 47 percent of the males carried out harvesting or other field jobs. The much lower percentage of females doing harvesting jobs in 2005 is probably a result of the presence of citrus farms in the later survey. The 1998 survey found that 32 percent of women and 22 percent of men were harvesting tomatoes, and 15 percent of females and 11 percent of males were harvesting other vegetable and fruit crops. Farmers relied less on males in picking "delicate crops." In the 2005 survey, there was no tomato harvesting and 18 percent of females and 17 percent of males harvested oranges, and 8 percent of females and 1 percent of males harvested other crops. Farmers had no concerns about males harvesting citrus fruit.

In 1997, with the passage of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act in South Africa, farmworkers came under standard labour legislation for the first time. Statutory minimum wages for farmworkers were not introduced until late 2002 when the minimum wage for farmworkers in rural or peri-urban locales was set at R650 a month. In 2005-6, the minimum wage for farmworkers in Limpopo province was R785.79 per month. The average pay for workers in the 2005 survey was just under R571 per month. Almost 35 percent received less than R400 per month (Table 10.8). More than half were earning less than the minimum wage. As in 1998, foremen and supervisors did not necessarily make that much more than ordinary labourers. One earned R650 per month, two earned R700 and another two earned R800. The seven workers who earned R900 or more included five drivers (three of whom made R1,200 per month, the highest recorded monthly salary), one mechanic, and one domestic worker.

Table 10.7: Farm Jobs by Sex

Task/Title	Female		Male	
	1998 (%)	2005 (%)	1998 (%)	2005 (%)
Harvesting	50	26	14	34
Oranges	3	18	13	22
Tomatoes	32	0	0	3
Other crops	15	8	1	11
Other horticultural work	32	12	2	3
Field work/General labour	5	11	21	27
Irrigation	0	5	2	3
Animal husbandry	0	0	1	1
Driving	0	6	10	13
Security/Crop guard	0	1	6	8
Domestic work	3	17	0	0
Other	3	9	5	6
Unknown	2	12	12	15
N =	60	65	142	78

Table 10.8: Monthly Wages

Rand	No.	%
R200	9	6.3
R201-400	39	27.3
R401-600	23	16.1
R601-800	46	32.1
R801-1,000	4	2.8
>R1,000	3	2.1
Unknown	19	13.3
N =	143	100

Living conditions varied tremendously for Zimbabwean (and other) farmworkers from farm to farm and even between different farmworkers on the same farm. Some farms

had brick houses with metal roofs that housed two families, or brick hostels, some of which even had electricity, for all of their workers, both permanent and seasonal. Other farmers reserved brick houses for permanent workers but placed seasonal workers in run-down pole and dagga huts, dilapidated brick houses, or whatever the workers could make on their own. And then there were farms on which the majority of workers, including permanent ones, had to make their own houses and thus most lived in pole and dagga houses.

The survey found that 6 percent of the workers lived in brick rooms with electricity, 2 percent in makeshift shelters, 52 percent in brick rooms without electricity and 31 percent in pole and dagga huts. Slightly more than a third of the workers lived in a room by themselves. The rest shared accommodation, with 26 percent living with another worker and 18 percent living with 3 or more other workers. Almost 40 percent of the surveyed workers complained about the toilet conditions on the farms although fewer (12 percent) complained about the availability and condition of drinking water.

On the farms visited in this border zone, there was no visible segregation of Zimbabwean from South African workers. However, workers were segregated on farms near the Botswana border and on farms in other parts of Limpopo province. Zimbabwean workers were explicitly viewed as “illegal” and as a potential targets of raids. In response, farmers had their Zimbabweans living away from the main farm compound, often hidden from view. On one farm next to the Botswana border, dozens of Zimbabweans were living in the bushes under plastic sheets. Their employer warned them to flee whenever unknown vehicles approached them, as it could be the authorities coming to round them up and deport them (the workers said the raids occurred about three times per week). These farmworkers said that they wanted to find jobs in the Soutpansberg area where they knew that they would be less vulnerable to deportation.

SAMP reported that Zimbabwean farmworkers in the late 1990s faced a range of difficulties at work. Some complained of poor treatment at the hands of farmers – of threats, insults, or beatings. A number also said that they had problems with the South African police arresting and deporting them if they did not have the relevant documents. Many of these reported deportations occurred just before payday. Farmers allegedly worked with the authorities to deport workers when they no longer needed them and before they paid them.²⁴ The respondents also complained about poor working conditions, sexual abuse, anti-Zimbabwean prejudice, and theft in the farm compound and

when crossing back into Zimbabwe. Many of these complaints were repeated during the 2005 research. Fewer workers said they were treated well by farmers than in 1998 – 35 percent compared to 53 percent.²⁵ Slightly less said they were badly treated – 34 percent compared to 40 percent. Fewer noted problems with harassment by police and lack of legal rights.

Even if they had a farmer-issued ID and were a permanent worker, many Zimbabweans mentioned their concern and anxiety about being harassed or deported by South African authorities. New or seasonal workers were most anxious about this issue as they were more vulnerable to being deported during farm raids or if stopped at road blocks. A number also complained about abuse by foremen (verbal and occasionally physical), and the demands made on Zimbabweans seeking work. On a few farms that had South African foremen but predominantly Zimbabwean workers, the foremen demanded bribes from migrants looking for work. The demands from male workers were monetary and from female workers sexual. A few women also noted the risk of rape on the compounds and by *maguma-guma*. Almost all workers talked about the verbal abuse they received from South Africans on the farms and in the towns. They noted that South Africans often had better jobs on the farms and looked down upon the Zimbabweans.

In early July 2005, the ex-Postal and Telecommunications Corporation of Zimbabwe employee referred to earlier, was working as a crop guard. However, he worked every day of the month from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. with no lunch or rest breaks. At his first payday he and three other Zimbabwean crop guards asked the farmer why they did not receive more than the minimum wage as they had worked for 198 hours. In early 2005, crop guards had been receiving R1,200 per month but as more Zimbabweans were crossing the border, the farmer lowered the wages. When they demanded more money, the farmer declared that for showing “such cheek” they would be fired after another week of work. The farmer rescinded his decision a week later, but they still did not receive higher wages.

The worker lived in an old three-room house with seven other Zimbabweans – it used to be a junior manager’s house but it was quite dilapidated by 2005. He complained about the lack of toilets and the fact that the water tank was open, which he and others associated with the constant diarrhoea that workers suffered. The worker was nervous as he had promised his wife that he would return in September, bringing back enough

money to help them and their two children to survive in Zvishivane's township. He also hoped to accumulate some money to buy a plough and fertilizer for a rural home in Mberengwa in eastern Zimbabwe. But now, he sighed, his "programme" seemed in disarray.

On the same farm, a 28-year-old woman began working as a seasonal worker in the pack-shed in 2003. She had completed her Form 4 in 1997 and worked as a storekeeper in the rural areas of Mberengwa before then, but the money she earned was too little to look after her young daughter and her mother (her husband had passed away). She found work on the farm through her two brothers who were already working there. She received the minimum wage. At the end of the month she would send some of the money back to her mother through a friend who travelled frequently to Mberengwa. Once the pack-shed closed down after three or four months, she would return to Zimbabwe through the border post, paying a fine for jumping the border on the way to South Africa. She said that this was preferable to jumping the border which she does when coming into South Africa; one time, she cautiously noted, she had been attacked and "violated" by *maguma-guma* when crossing the border. In Zimbabwe, she farms with her mother at their small rural plot, though the previous season they had harvested nothing because of drought.

On another farm, a 25-year-old worker came to South Africa in 2002. He had trained as a bricklayer in Bulawayo but failed to find work. His brother had been working on a farm in the "special employment zone" since 1998 and had married a South African woman and managed to get South African identification. His brother told him about bricklaying work on a neighbouring farm and he did that work until 2004. Then he became a supervisor in the pack-shed. He received R635 per month, which he said was much higher than the R200-300 the vast majority of Zimbabwean workers received on this farm. Every three or four months he returned to the rural areas near Gwanda, bringing money to his parents. He often travelled back and forth through one of the gates in the fence, making arrangements with some of the soldiers to open and close the gate for a fee. His real passion is music, and he invested in musical instruments and put together a gospel group with other Zimbabwean workers. His plan was to get a recording contract and work in Zimbabwe once "things improve there."

CROSS-BORDER DEPENDENCIES

The majority of farmworkers return to Zimbabwe on a regular basis. Eighty-six percent of those who responded to the question had been home in the previous year. The majority jumped the border to return, but 35 percent went back through a border post. Some did so because they had permits; others paid a fine for not leaving Zimbabwe through legal means. Those carrying goods home alleged that they bribe the Zimbabwean authorities, as it is safer to bring their goods back through a border post than risk meeting *magumaguma* on the Zimbabwean side and having their goods and money stolen.

When they return to Zimbabwe, the workers bring back a wide variety of items, including goods that were once commonly found in many Zimbabwean households such as maize meal, soap, sugar and cooking oil. All of these items were either impossible to find in Zimbabwe due to the economic meltdown or prices were too prohibitive for the vast majority of people. Those with some money, particularly permanent workers, would bring back clothes, electronic equipment, bicycles, household items, automobile parts, and so forth. They would also bring South African rands to convert into Zimbabwean dollars at the black-market rate to give to dependants, buy food and clothes and pay school fees.

Of the 104 respondents who had returned to Zimbabwe within the previous year, just over 50 percent had brought home food and a similar number brought rands. Over 20 percent had brought clothes and 10 percent household items, including appliances like paraffin stoves. Those who had taken money back, took just under R490 on average. Some of the money went to relatives while some was used to buy cattle or other livestock or to build a rural home. However, some had no money or goods to bring back, especially if they were deported or because the money they earned was being used mainly to cover their living expenses in South Africa.

Zimbabwean farmworkers also remit to relatives without returning themselves. Nearly 60 percent of the respondents regularly send money or food back to dependants. The majority send it with others while a few send items by mail. This usually requires getting someone to take the money to Beitbridge, converting it to Zimbabwean dollars on the black market and then sending a postal order to relatives. Others used relatives or neighbours who come to visit or who are looking for work on the farms and then return to their home area. Still others used informal courier services through the vehicular traffic going back and forth across the border.

The number of people in Zimbabwe being supported by farmworkers' remittances has climbed in recent years. In 1998, for example, SAMP found that its 202 respondents supported 329 other people in Zimbabwe (a dependency factor of 1.6 people per respondent.) By 2005, the number of dependants reliant on farm incomes had increased considerably. There was a considerable range in the number of dependants supported but, in total, the 143 respondents supported 537 other people in Zimbabwe (dependency factor of 3.8, more than double the dependency ratio of 1998) (Table 10.9). The large increase corroborates what Zimbabwean farmworkers said about the need to find any work in South Africa to acquire the money and resources to send back to family members and kin in Zimbabwe who often desperately needed basic goods or the currency to buy them.

Table 10.9: Number of People Supported in Zimbabwe

No. of Dependants	No.	%
0	14	9.8
1	6	4.2
2	20	14.0
3	21	14.7
4	14	9.8
5	18	12.6
6	9	6.3
7	13	9.1
8	3	2.1
9	1	0.7
10+	9	6.3
Unknown	15	10.4

N = 143

A small number of farmworkers (13 percent) were involved in various "projects" (income-generating activities) back in Zimbabwe. These workers either invested in certain agricultural technologies or received the technology from the South African farmer. They were generally permanent workers involved in a type of patron-client relationship with the farmer. Other projects were of a "buying-selling" nature, bringing goods such

as clothes, food items, and even TVs from South Africa to sell in Zimbabwe. However, the vast majority of the workers were not involved in such activities. When asked why they were not involved, most said that their money was used to look after themselves and dependants back home.

The majority of the workers were interested in returning to Zimbabwe. However, they also wanted to remain in South Africa until the situation in Zimbabwe improved, as the money that they earned, even if it was a pittance, enabled them and their dependants to survive. In the survey, 62 percent wanted to stay a "long time" in South Africa, with 59 percent expressing an interest in returning to Zimbabwe at some point in the future. A number of Zimbabweans were hoping to make it to Johannesburg or Pretoria, staying with relatives if they could. Others were actively looking for ways to better integrate in South Africa, through acquiring official documents and/or learning some of the national languages spoken in the country so that they could more easily "pass" as South African. In the survey, 14 workers stated that they had acquired South African identification; five said that they paid for it and four said that the farmer arranged it for them.

CONCLUSION

Zimbabwean farmworkers constitute the vast majority of farmworkers in northern South Africa. Although they are employed in a variety of positions, including supervisory or lower management jobs, their wages on average are lower than mandatory minimum wages. Workers use their wages to assist dependants back in Zimbabwe, but there was a much higher dependency ratio per worker in 2005 than in 1998. Another noticeable difference concerns the skills and education profile of the migrants. In 1998, the Zimbabwean migrants were vulnerable to exploitation because of their own limited skills: "Zimbabwean labour migrants are cast to the very edges of the labour-surplus regional economy where they remain trapped by the lack of skills, low wages and the absence of opportunities for occupational development."²⁶ The Zimbabwean migrants who came after 2000 were more educated. Many had had jobs in Zimbabwe (as well as access to rural land). Very few had prior experience on farms before migrating to South Africa. They were not driven to work on low-paying South African farms because of a lack of skills. The majority were driven there because of the meltdown in Zimbabwe.

If and when the political and economic “meltdown” in Zimbabwe ends and there is some form of recovery, many of these Zimbabweans will probably continue to live and work in northern South Africa and to operate through the cross-border ties and practices that they have forged. Although the new corporate permits may provide more security in terms of minimizing the threat of deportation, it is unlikely that they will affect the networking and forging of relationships and forms of belonging (through marriage, livelihoods, friends, accumulation, and so forth).

Moreover, it is unclear whether these corporate permits will do anything to minimize the flaunting of labour laws by farmers. If anything, the corporate permit augments the power and authority of employers over farmworkers.²⁷ The poor living and working conditions on the farms should be addressed through the trade unions working with farmworkers and the labour inspectorate of the Department of Labour. However, none of the Zimbabwean farmworkers interviewed had dealt with either a trade union official or a Labour Department official. Three people in the survey said that they had seen Labour officials inquiring about the low wages. Many noted that the actual capacity, reach, and effectiveness of trade unions for representing farmworkers more broadly in South Africa is very limited.²⁸ Such attention should not focus on the legality or illegality of Zimbabweans in South Africa.²⁹ Greater effort is required to improve the livelihoods and opportunities for all farmworkers. Finding administrative arrangements and legal instruments to legalize the status of Zimbabweans in South Africa is important, but it is clear that even if state officials recognize Zimbabwean farmworkers as legal, national distinctions will continue to be emphasized and important in everyday encounters and practices.³⁰

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NOTES

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- 3 A. Hammar, B. Raftopoulos, and S. Jensen, eds., *Zimbabwe's Unfinished Business: Rethinking Land, State and Nation in the Context of Crisis* (Harare: Weaver Press, 2003); P. Bond and M. Manyanya, *Zimbabwe's Plunge: Exhausted Nationalism, Neoliberalism and the Search for Social Justice* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2002); B. Rutherford, "Conditional Belonging: Farmworkers and the Cultural Politics of Recognition in Zimbabwe" *Development and Change* 39(1) (2008): 73-99.
- 4 Forced Migration Studies Programme and Musina Legal Advice Office, *Special Report: Fact or Fiction? Examining Zimbabwean Cross-Border Migration into South Africa* (FMSP and MLAO, Johannesburg, 2007), p. 1.
- 5 E. Lahiff, *An Apartheid Oasis? Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods in Venda* (London: Frank Cass, 2000); A. Jeeves and J. Crush, eds., *White Farms, Black Labor: The State and Agrarian Change in Southern Africa, 1910-1950* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1997).
- 6 P. Hugo, "Frontier Farmers in South Africa" *African Affairs* 87(349) (1988): 537-52; B. Rutherford and L. Addison, "Zimbabwean Farmworkers in Northern South Africa" *Review of African Political Economy* 34(114) (2007): 619-635; C. Mather and S. Greenberg "Market Liberalisation in Post-Apartheid South Africa: The Restructuring of Citrus Exports after 'Deregulation'" *Journal of Southern African Studies* 29(2) (2003): 393-412.
- 7 Lincoln and Maririke, "Southward Migrants in the Far North" p. 43.
- 8 Ibid, p. 44.
- 9 Forced Migration Studies Programme and Musina Legal Advice Office, *Fact or Fiction?*, p. 6.
- 10 Lincoln and Maririke, "Southward Migrants in the Far North," pp. 45-48.
- 11 J. Crush, "Introduction: Making Hay with Foreign Farmworkers" In Crush, *Borderline Farming*, p. 10.
- 12 See, for example, "Government to Meet on Phantom Farm Labour 'Agreement'" *Mail & Guardian* 19 February 1999; "Germans set to help catch Northern Province's illegal immigrants" *African Eye News Service* 3 May 1999; *Sowetan* 9 December 1999.
- 13 Northern Province Department of Labour (NPDOL), *Report on Foreign Labour North of the Zoupanenberg, Northern Province* (unpublished, Polokwane, South Africa: NPDOL, 2000).
- 14 "Zimbabwean Farmworkers Told to Leave SA" *SABC* 11 October 2001; "SA to Deport 15 000 Zimbabweans" *Mail & Guardian* 14 October 2001.
- 15 "Farmers, Home Affairs Agree to Stall Workers Evictions" *SABC* 15 October 2001.
- 16 The corporate permit system was designed for companies to rapidly import high-level skills. In practice, no employer could be refused the right to apply and the permit system is now

widely used by employers of unskilled migrants, including commercial farms and the mining industry.

- 17 Human Rights Watch (HRW), *Unprotected Migrants: Zimbabweans in South Africa's Limpopo Province* (Johannesburg: HRW, 2006), pp. 14-15.
- 18 Zimbabwean primary school goes from Grade 1 to Grade 7. The students can then do Forms 1 to 4 of secondary school before sitting for Ordinary level ("O levels") examinations in the subjects they choose. They can then take Forms 5 and 6 and write Advanced level ("A levels") examinations in a few subjects. Even before 2000, the cost of the school fees and examination fees often meant that many fewer students wrote their O levels, let alone their A levels, than wanted to do so.
- 19 C. Chetsanga, *An Analysis of the Cause and Effect of the Brain Drain in Zimbabwe* (Harare: Scientific and Industrial Research and Development Research Centre, 2003); D. Tevera and J. Crush, *The New Brain Drain from Zimbabwe* SAMP Migration Policy Series No. 29, Cape Town, 2003.
- 20 Ibid, p. 43.
- 21 T. Ranger, "Missionaries, Migrants and the Manyika: The Invention of Ethnicity in Zimbabwe" In L. Vail, ed., *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (London: James Currey, 1989). Although Ranger focuses on the creation of "Manyika," another identified "Shona sub-ethnicity," he does briefly mention a history of the Karanga as an ethnic category.
- 22 D. Potts and C. Mutambira, "Rural-Urban Linkages in Contemporary Harare: Why Migrants Need Their Land" *Journal of Southern African Studies* 16(4) (1990): 677-98.
- 23 However, *maguma-guma* can also refer to those people who guide Zimbabweans over the border for a fee. For example, Lincoln and Maririke use the term to refer to push-cart operators working in the Beitbridge area; Lincoln and Maririke, "Southward Migrants in the Far North," p. 55.
- 24 See, for example, Crush, "Introduction: Making Hay," p. 9.
- 25 The figure from Lincoln and Maririke combined the 5 percent who claimed that they were 'very well treated' and the 49 percent who claimed they were 'well treated.'
- 26 Lincoln and Maririke, "Southward Migrants in the Far North," p. 60.
- 27 B. Dodson and J. Crush, "South African Immigration Law: A Gender Analysis" SAMP Migration Policy Brief No. 16, Cape Town, 2006, p. 13.
- 28 J. Ewert and J. Hamman, "Why Paternalism Survives: Globalization, Democratization, and Labour on South African Wine Farms" *Sociologia Ruralis* 39(2) (1999): 216-17; A. Isaacs, "Trapped Farm Labour: Obstacles to Rights and Freedom" *Development Update*, 4(2) (2003): 27-54; S. Woolman and M. Bishop, "Down on the Farm and Barefoot in the Kitchen: Farm

Labour and Domestic Labour as Forms of Servitude" *Development Southern Africa* 24(4) (2007): 595-606.

- 29 For a complementary argument, see Refugees International, "Zimbabwe Exodus: Too Little, but Not Too Late" 7 November 2007.
- 30 For a discussion of treatment and perceptions of Zimbabweans in urban South Africa and Botswana, see F. Nyamnjoh, *Insiders and Outsiders: Citizenship and Xenophobia in Contemporary Southern Africa* (London: Zed Books, 2006).

IF I GET SICK, TAKE ME HOME

I'm 26 and single with no child. I have been here in Johannesburg since 1998. I was looking for a job and that's why I came here. When I left it wasn't so bad but now, as I was just there, life is hard, things have changed. I came to South Africa because there are many relatives here. I didn't want to be alone. My father was so cross when he heard I was here. My father stays in Bloemfontein so when he heard that I was in Johannesburg he came and I was staying at Berea and he wanted to take me back home because the flat we were living in was full of Nigerians and he thought that I was going to get involved in drugs. So he wanted me to go back home because I was still young at that time. But my mother knew that I was coming and he got used to the idea.

I didn't know much about South Africa. The only thing I'd heard was that it was a bad country. I was expecting to find too much crime and I was very scared my first few weeks. I wanted to go home but I got used to the place. Since I've been here, the only problem I've experienced is not getting a job. Now I'm a telemarketer. It is hard and difficult work. I don't send money home. My father does that. I just look after myself. Life can be difficult if you are not working in this country.

Also, the police once they arrest you they don't give you a chance to produce your papers or anything, they just grab you by your clothes and shove you inside their vans or whatever they'll be using for transport on that day. And by the police station you get harassed as if you have stolen something. They are treating people like animals. I don't even have a word

to describe South African police. There are also a few South Africans that are always calling me names like “*Makhalanga*” even though I’m not a *khalanga* so it’s boring. When I walk around Hillbrow I always think what if somebody grabs me and shoves me into a dark place and rapes me and things like that because in Zimbabwe rape cases are not much. But here you always hear about rape.

If you are a Zimbabwean and you are having a baby in South Africa you are not treated well by the nurses there in JHB hospital. My sister was one of those people who went through that ordeal. They call you names and tell you, “You *Khalanga*, you come here to make babies why don’t you go back to your own country and have babies” as if having a child is committing crime. Even if you get sick you are not treated like a South African will be treated at hospital. They won’t give you any medicine. That’s what they do in Johannesburg; they are so rough. If you take whoever is sick to that hospital, the chances of them getting out alive in that hospital are slim to nil. I always tell my family member that if I get sick please take me home, don’t take me to Johannesburg hospital.



Chapter Eleven

The Voices of Migrant Zimbabwean Women in South Africa

Kate Lefko-Everett

In 2005, the Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) conducted a qualitative research project with women migrants living temporarily or permanently in South Africa (the Migrant Voices Project or MVP). Through in-depth interviews and focus groups with women migrants, MVP gathered data on various issues including migration decision-making, travel preparations, experiences while migrating, household and livelihood change, experiences of living in a foreign country, and treatment from families and communities when returning home to countries of origin. Interviews and focus groups also explored participants' perceptions of the importance of migration for women in Southern Africa, gender-specific challenges, awareness of laws and policy, and recommendations for change.

In total, 54 women migrants in the Johannesburg area participated in in-depth interviews. More than half of the women were Zimbabwean. Similarly, Zimbabwean women constituted a majority of participants in the six focus groups held in Johannesburg and Makhado, located close to the border between Zimbabwe and Limpopo Province. The in-depth interviews and focus groups conducted through MVP uncovered the stories and experiences of a group of migrant women who are far from passive victims of broader social and economic forces. Most of the Zimbabwean women participating in the study made the difficult decision to leave home in response to poverty, unemployment,

inflation, and food insecurity. A deeply gendered dimension of the relationship between poverty and migration emerged, in which women were caregivers, households heads, and main breadwinners for their families. Women's migration decisions were, therefore, often tinged by a profound sense of both obligation and urgency. This raises questions about gendered productive roles within families in the SADC region, and specifically within migrant-sending households. This chapter presents the results of the MVP and attempts to convey something of the lived experience of female migrants. The identity of the migrants is not revealed.

DECIDING TO MIGRATE

Poverty, unemployment and economic hardship are the main migration "push factors" or female Zimbabwean migrants. They describe how bad the situation has become in Zimbabwe and cite factors such as a lack of jobs, inflation, devalued currency and the high cost of living as the main reasons behind the decision to migrate:

You know, in Zimbabwe, things are very tough there due to our poor economy...in our country we've got lack of employment, that is what I can say, in Zimbabwe there are few jobs rather than in South Africa (Interview 25).

Life at Zimbabwe is poor and jobs are scarce, and once you get that job money is scarce too. Even if you got that money, you will buy nothing with that money. So when I moved from there to South Africa, money here has value (Interview 45).

In Zimbabwe it's difficult, that's the poorest country in the whole world. It's difficult living in Zimbabwe because you can't get a job nor even sell something, but you just sit there and starve to death If life was fine we would not be here (Focus Group 3 Participant).

The situation in Zimbabwe is very bad – there are no jobs, no food, no fuel and everything like that (Interview 34).

I was just there, life is hard, things have changed... Home sweet home is always the best way, but lack of basic things – that is the main problem in Zimbabwe (Interview 19).

It was starting to be bad. There was a shortage of maize meal, sugar, and there was no rain...There is nothing you can buy in Zimbabwe, since the situation is bad (Interview 29).

Many said they were optimistic about what they would find in South Africa after migrating:

Of course they said in South Africa it is better and the food is cheap and it is easy to find food (Interview 29).

I wanted to go and look for money. I first of all saw people from South Africa – they were having a lot of money and they were eating nice food, and clothes, and everything was looking so nice, that is why I decided to come to this country (Interview 34).

Most migrant women also expected that they would be able to find work, or opportunities for business or trade in South Africa. One Zimbabwean woman had heard from other migrants in South Africa that, “you can find a job, work for yourself, manage to bring up your family, you can do everything that you want” (Interview 26).

Migration was therefore viewed as a strategy for women to “stand up and do things for themselves”:

Yes, [it is important for women to migrate] because they are the ones who are responsible at home. They are the ones who support the family. [Men] do, but women are the ones that work harder (Interview 24).

A woman has more brains than man. A man can just leave his wife home and come this side and sit and just forget. Maybe you will be sitting at home and the next thing your husband has another wife in Johannesburg, but a woman will come to Johannesburg and still think of going back home to her children...A man can stay here for ten years without returning home. We just wait for him, what will we do? He would say, “Can’t you hear when I say where I work there are no phones?” And when you are just a woman and maybe you are in the rural area there is nothing like phones. He will tell you that you don’t have to write him a letter ‘cause once you do that he’ll be arrested. So you just stay at home and wait. Women are the ones who take care of their families most of the time. Because women know

that my family has to bathe, eat and get some clothing, but men don't care for a family. It is important for women to stand and do things for themselves (Interview 28).

Beyond the obvious economic benefits, the experience of migration is considered important for women for a range of other reasons, including the value of travel itself, particularly from a "closed country" such as Zimbabwe:

Yes, [migration] is important. Do you think it is nice to be a lazy mother and never know other countries because you will find yourself in a difficult situation when a person asks you to come to South Africa, Botswana or UK? You wouldn't know what to do. You wouldn't know what to do at the border or which forms you have to fill or what (Interview 23).

It is very important because if you migrate you get exposure to new ideas. You know if you stay in Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe is a closed country to you, things like internet and the latest technology, in Zimbabwe they come very late. So if you migrate you become open-minded (Interview 69).

It's important to me because now I've experienced a lot in travelling from one country to another, I know so many things, I've experienced so many things and the good thing is that I now know different cultures, we are just a little bit different, but otherwise we Africans are just the same... if I weren't enjoying it, I wouldn't be here now. I'm okay, and if I skip a month without coming here, I feel like there is something incomplete in me (Interview 46).

Decisions to migrate are not always welcomed by family and community members. While some said their family supported their decision to migrate, particularly given unemployment and poverty in Zimbabwe, others faced more negative responses. These reactions were most often linked to the perceived risks of travelling and living in South Africa:

At first it wasn't easy for [my family] to accept [my decision to migrate] because they were worried that I might be killed in South Africa (Interview 46).

Many of my family was discouraging me – they told me many things about South Africa. They said I could lose my belongings, I can get shot or what,

so I was discouraged. The first time it was difficult for me, but at the end they supported me (Interview 18).

The prospect of leaving family members, including young children, behind is one of the most difficult aspects of deciding to migrate:

As a woman I don't think it is easy to leave home, especially for those who got kids at home. I think it is so difficult leaving the kids behind, but then again the situation forces you because you can't be with your kids every night and day and seeing them go hungry (Interview 19).

For a woman it is difficult. From her country to another country she leaves because she can't take it anymore. So she will be in need of money but as she needs money she will think that she has to go back to look for her children (Interview 28).

It was difficult. I wished to stay in my house... I didn't like coming here because my children are not yet grown up, they are still small... They stay by themselves, what can I do? My sister is taking care of them, she also gives them food. And when I get money here I send it for them even though the money I get here is little, because when they buy mealie-meal it is finished (Interview 23).

Other migrants describe the difficulty of leaving behind siblings, extended family members, and elderly and dependant parents.

Preparations for departure are generally limited, and few women make specific arrangements for transportation or accommodation far in advance of leaving home. They often purchase goods before travelling to South Africa. In some cases, this is based on a preference for specific products from home: one woman explained that she preferred Zimbabwean rice, and would purchase enough to bring to South Africa before leaving home. Women conducting cross-border trade purchase stock for resale in South Africa, which includes curios and traditional clothing, as well as more conventional stock such as garlic crushers, doilies and covers.

The women spend considerable time and resources obtaining visas to travel to South Africa. Many described the difficulties of obtaining a visa which included application costs, requisite proof of sufficient funds and administrative delays:

It was difficult because South Africa wants a visa when you come from Zimbabwe. So to have a visa, you need to have money. So I couldn't because I didn't have money...I think the last time it was R1,000... It is difficult because women can't follow it. So you find they risk their lives because they want to cross and come this side...So I think it is difficult, at least if there were no visas it was going to be easy. Visas make people suffer (Interview 28).

I can't say for other people's countries, but for my country it is difficult because we're not given visas, you have to have a visa to come here. So if you don't have it, you can't come... They want money and it costs a lot to have a visa (Interview 50).

They need you to have a passport and the visa so that you can come here but it's so difficult to get a visa (Interview 26).

In spite of the high costs, many women make sure that they have legal travel documents before migrating. However, a number of women choose (or are forced) to travel through irregular means. Women who take this route often cannot afford the cost of a visa or viewed the process of obtaining a passport as virtually impossible. Rather than restricting their movement, visa requirements push them into irregular channels, at major risk to their personal safety.

CROSSING INTO SOUTH AFRICA

After leaving home in Zimbabwe, most women travel to formal border posts and cross into South Africa. Aside from complaints about long queues, discomfort due to heat, and a lack of toilets and other facilities, most described their experiences of crossing the border as relatively easy, and said they were treated well by immigration officials.

Although some women described problems in transporting goods and complained of high customs duties, those travelling on commercial buses mentioned that bus drivers are often willing to assist in talking to immigration officials, in paying required customs duties and with any other problems they encounter. They generally prefer to travel through legal border posts than risk irregular migration.

Some women cross the border on foot, while others arrange private cars to transport them across the border:

I won't say they treated us badly because I didn't see harassment or anything like that, because whatever they want they talk to the driver and that is all. They don't talk to us because already I would have spoken to the driver that I don't have the passport and the papers. So when the driver arrives there he talks to them and I just sit ... I did not come the legal way. I just came the illegal way. I did not get the passport. I just carried my ID in case and my baby's things. I used a private car. When I arrived at the border I just sat in the car and the person that I was with went in and produced his passport and also produced car papers and I just passed, and when I arrived at the gate, when they wanted my passport, he gave them money (Interview 28).

Women at Makhado said that it is preferable to bribe immigration officials at a border post than risk "jumping the fence":

Coming from home up to here is not easy. We will be shivering. There is a code at the border post we call it diarrhoea in our country, we call it a running stomach. You don't know what the officers are going to say to you... if you don't want any problem, put money inside the passport and give it to the immigration officer then the immigration officer will ask you how many days you want (Laughter). And when you say two months he'll say yes 'mam (Focus Group 6 Participant).

[Bribery] is working cause if you don't have money you'll get two days or you'll never get to enter South Africa at that border post, at that Beitbridge border post. Even if your passport has expired you put money and you give it to an officer, and you will get a pass to South Africa (Focus Group 6 Participant).

Some avoid legal border posts altogether, particularly if they have no papers or sufficient funds to bribe their way across. They travel to a more remote and unguarded part of the border, where they pay people who guide irregular crossers (known as *malaisha* or those who carry). The women described the trauma of irregular entry, including crossing rivers and difficult terrain, the constant fear of being caught, attacks by wild animals and abuse and victimisation by armed gangs:

When you apply for a visa they ask you a lot of questions and it's expensive. I realised that it would be difficult for me to get it, and I talked to people who usually go to Johannesburg and they told me that I only need to have R500. They took me and left me at Beitbridge, and from there it was bad and it was difficult for me to pass through there...I don't have travelling documents and I'm relying on these people and they left me there all alone by myself and they went through, crossing the border. And when I was left there alone I met two ladies who joined me, and we slept there trying to find a way to get through to South Africa. We just slept in the fields around there and late at night we crossed the border because people were not many. We spent three days there wondering what we would do. I was thinking about my children back at home because I told my children that I was going to work at Johannesburg. After those three days we met truck drivers and we talked to them. They took us and dropped us off at Musina because that's where they were going, and we took off from there (Focus Group 3 Participant).

I didn't prepare anything, I just came with the malaisha...They carry across borders. We pass by the forest...You can get hurt, you can die there since they say there are wild animals. It might happen that I could die, and you go with the fear (Interview 31).

There are taxis, which you have to hire, and at the border you have to jump because we are illegal. At the fence there are boys who live in the bush who help us to cross the border. When we reach Beitbridge Border we have to go to the bush at night, not during the day, at night. Then we have to go under the fence or over the fence. Then we have to look for transport when we reach the Messina border. There are guys there who can take you and show you the way, and sometimes they can rape you or take all your belongings. They are very cruel because they don't listen to you when you are talking. They just want you to listen to all their instructions. When they want to rape you they can kill you. There are shortest ways and longest ways. Some can take two hours, some you can take more than that (Interview 34).

Irregular female migrants are in constant danger of sexual exploitation, abuse and rape. They told of being assaulted by the *malaisha* and of trading sex with immigration and police officials to avoid arrest and deportation:

The police will arrest you, but if you sleep with him they won't. I'll tell them I'm from Zimbabwe. If they see that you're beautiful, they then propose to you and you'll leave with them. If you sleep with them, they'll tell you go... They check you as you approach. Even inside and taxis from across the border they take beautiful ladies and you'll meet up with them at the police station. They would have had sex with the girls as a form of payment for being illegal. They would have finished with the beautiful ones... You see, if a person wants to sleep with you they don't propose to you, they won't tell you that they love you, and you'll also not tell him that you love him. He will tell you to give him money, and if you don't have, he'll pull you to the side and the next thing he'll touch you. He tells you that if you don't have any money, let's do this and that. He'll tell you to sleep with him and do all those things. You see, even with you and I, I can see what is happening, like whatever happens at the border gates I can see. The one thing that I see is that the police will sleep with the girl at the border gates. They'll even make a girl cross to Pietersburg, so that they can have sex with her in their van (Focus Group 4 Participant).

My husband left me with two kids, he decided to go on with his programme, so I decided to come to South Africa. I went to Beitbridge on foot up to the river. I didn't have any money, any passport. It was through the rural areas that I walked from there to the river and it was at night, at the river we found soldiers who wanted money. If we did not have money they demanded sex. I slept with the soldiers because I didn't even have a single cent. Then I crossed to the farms next to the Limpopo to work there (Focus Group 5 Participant).

Women in a Johannesburg Focus group suggested that even if "we don't agree with our heart," women submit to forced and coercive sex "because it's compulsory."

MIGRATION, CHANGE AND EXCLUSION

Many women felt their lives had improved significantly as a result of migration to South Africa. Virtually all said that their economic circumstances improved significantly after migration:

The only problem is of not finding a job, but the food is better because I can afford to buy...I won't say I have money like that, but the conditions are better here than back home because I do get food and clothing and I am able to buy them (Interview 29).

When I am here I am able to make money. And the money that I'm making is able to make me live. It's not like Zimbabwe, like when my husband was getting paid month-end - after three days, I don't see the money any more. So when I am in Johannesburg it's better because things here are cheap. Even though the money is little we try to live (Interview 28).

It's not the same, as I was at home doing nothing. It's not the same since I'm here. Here I know I can get the bread and send money home (Interview 32).

Through remittances, migration impacts positively on the children and families of women migrants too. As one explained, "If my children need something I am able to do it for them one by one, every month." A second stated, "I send money every month – at least they are buying something." Others commented:

Now I send money to home, and the business is better because I send money. Sometimes I buy something like Vaseline and send it to home (Interview 30).

I can say my lifestyle changed – it has gone better, a little bit better. I am able to have my own money and I am able to support my own kids. I am able to go back to Zimbabwe and come back...I can send [my family] everything they need, all kinds of groceries that I buy in South Africa, I send them to Zimbabwe (Interview 34).

Here things are cheap, at home it is not easy to get cheap things like this... I see I changed a lot, because I know how to support my mother and my

younger sisters and brothers. They can go to school now because I send the money there, you see (Interview 30).

I can say there are a lot of changes in my family... economically and financially. 'Cause most of my family – especially most of my sisters and brothers, they have changed schools and the household, we have better things like theatre systems. Everything is okay because I don't buy groceries that side. I bring it with me because this side, it is cheaper than that side (Interview 43).

Although many women feel their lives improved economically after migrating, their social experience of living in South Africa is not as positive. Three years before the widespread xenophobic violence of May of 2008, most recounted daily experiences of harassment, abuse and exclusion by citizens, government officials and police officers. Most common is the relentless name-calling and blame for South Africa's social ills:

People here treat us bad. They call us names like makwerekwere and everything (Interview 24).

These ones, they are worst to be honest with you, South Africans, they don't really like foreigners and they call us by names such as kwerekwere, which we don't like (Interview 25).

The treatment is not the same like other South African citizens. When I walk out in the street, I look out for police cars. If I can see it when I get back, they just see you walking and they will say to you, "Hey you, khalanga, come this side!" So, I don't know how they see you, but the truth is that they do see you, that you are a khalanga and you are from Zimbabwe (Interview 28).

You can say there is harassment by officials because today we've got names. It's not nice, those makwerekweres, it's not a nice word, it's an insulting word. So, when they use those words to us it means they don't like us (Focus Group 5 Participant).

Like where we stay, they said they want to remove us – they want to go house-to-house looking, and if there's a Zimbabwean they must deport because they don't want foreigners...Some say that we women take their

husbands and we also take jobs...but it's not true. If they don't take care of their husbands, what must we do (Focus Group 5 Participant)?

They say the Zimbabweans steal our things. They break our property at night, they take bribes. Right they are going to deport us. Before we came here to South Africa were there no robbers and thieves, here in South Africa, were there no thieves before Zimbabweans came? (Focus Group 5 Participant)

Name-calling, stereotypes and social exclusion are insulting to hard-working migrant women, who expressed surprise at such open hostility in South Africa. With few prospects for social integration, they develop coping mechanisms and survival strategies for living in South Africa. Some try to assimilate. One migrant described changing her dress style to avoid being noticed. She explained that the police "know how we walk and how we dress: South Africans put on trousers and Zimbabweans put on dresses." Another added that before migrating, she asked her brothers to teach her how to "walk" like a South African. Women also tend to live and work in communities where there are other migrants from Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

In addition to poor treatment from citizens, many migrant women experience routine harassment from police and government officials, as well as exclusion from basic services such as healthcare and education. They recounted how they are often "chased" by police, and under threat of arrest and deportation, forced to pay bribes of cash, food or drinks, or goods and stock. Rather than risk arrest, many women agree to these criminal demands by agents of the state:

[Bribing] is not nice because even now we do it; if you don't have money you'll be arrested and if you have it you survive through bribe. You see that. These police, when they are sent to catch criminals, they don't do that instead they arrest us. They don't arrest criminals, but they are busy walking down the streets looking for IDs and passports... When they make us pay, money does not go to the government but to their pockets. Now they don't want R50 anymore, but now if you give them R100 they tell you to go to hell, the money is just peanuts... if you have money you are fine because you know that if you are caught you'll bribe them (Focus Group 3 Participant).

The cops arrest us and the citizens and the community, they call us names. Like kwerekwere. Sometimes the cops take you to the police stations and they make you pay some money which makes it difficult because sometimes you don't have the money... That money would be a bribe for a policeman not to take you or make you stay in the cell for a night... We are afraid of staying in the cell so we do the payment out of the police station, or maybe somewhere outside of the police station, because if they take you to the police station they will deport. They want R300 per person (Participant 43).

Migrant women said that bribing police officers is necessary to avoid being taken to the notorious Lindela Repatriation Centre, which came under scrutiny in 2005 following the deaths of 27 inmates over an eight-month period. A Ministerial Committee of Enquiry investigating conditions at Lindela found overcrowded sleeping quarters with "sometimes 50 inmates per room," that "bedding and food supply (are) not optimal" and that there is "a communication problem, in particular language barriers."¹ Detained migrants were "concerned about deaths at the facility [and the] lack of transparency on the part of Lindela and Consulates that represent the interests of the ruling party in Zimbabwe." The Committee also noted that medical care for detainees was inadequate.

Women with experience of Lindela recounted experiences of neglect, poor treatment, and solicitation of bribes and sex in exchange for release from the Centre. One Zimbabwean woman described being denied food and physically abused by Lindela officials:

While I was staying [in Alexandra] I was always a victim for the police arrests and raids every time... At times I would bribe them but at other times they turned down a bribe... But what used to amaze me was that this was done by the same people every time and they knew us. They would make us pay. One day they found me alone and my friend was not there. They took me to Lindela where they kept me for two weeks and from there they took me home. I went back home and then I returned back here... It depends on how you talk. Sometimes [the police] can allow you not to go to Lindela or sometimes they refuse to take money from us and take us to Lindela. It's hard there, the securities beat us, and life there is just not good. We are sometimes denied food and sometimes we get it late and they give

us little food and we're hungry. According to me it's not right because every time I return from Lindela I will be very sick. We eat porridge. They give tea with milk already and you can't see if they have put something inside your tea, and a single slice of bread. And at three in the afternoon, they give us a little pap. That's all we eat. We do bathe [and] sleep but we have to share blankets yet we're sleeping on single separated beds. They have bedbugs (Focus Group 3 Participant).

Another described how, despite having legal travel documents and paying a bribe to police officers in Beitbridge, she was arrested and taken to Lindela:

[The police] came while we were sleeping and they asked for the passport and we showed them and everything we had and they said that we are going to our offices. We went to their offices, and when we got there they said that each of us must pay R300 and we paid it and we stayed for five days and they took us to Lindela on the sixth day and we stayed at Lindela for seven days and they didn't mention what was the R300 for and we paid out of our own pockets. We had declared our goods and we had passports. We paid even if I had to go home. If you said that you did not have any money you just got here today, they would send a lady to search us and it was irritating and she wore gloves. Simply because we are hiding the money, we hide it in our private parts. Yes, they got that R300 and there were about eleven of us and they didn't assist us with anything. They left us to starve. They left us with out food. We spent the whole six days without food, but they gave us a little bit of porridge in the morning and a bit of pap and some vegetables. That's when they started to assess us according to our age. How old we were, so that they can transport us. The old would go with the old and the youth with the youth because they were using a small van. From Lindela we used a small van to Beitbridge. At Beitbridge, some of the things were missing and some people lost their passports because they were holding our passports. When we told them that our things were missing they said that it's not their fault (Focus Group 5 Participant).

In addition to harassment, bribery and abuse from police officers and Lindela staff, migrant women encounter significant barriers in accessing basic services, health-

care in particular. At public clinics and hospitals, they experience xenophobic language, substandard treatment, and are overcharged for services or simply refused care. Two women said they were told to “go back to Zimbabwe” at medical clinics:

I went to the clinic and I had a headache, and when I got there the nurse asked me what was my problem and I told her that my head is aching and she said why can't you go to Zimbabwe? Because I was sick I went there to seek help, but she told me to go to seek help in Zimbabwe, and I told her that I'm not here for holiday but I'm here because I'm sick. I told her that I did not come for politics. She just gave me some tablets and I left. She didn't even check my temperature or anything (Focus Group 5).

I remember the last time I went to clinic and the person said this one is from Zimbabwe she must go back to Zimbabwe you won't get any medicine. We give the South Africans only this medicine is for South Africans only. They only gave me Panado (paracetamol) even in the hospitals (Focus Group 6 Participant).

Experiences of neglect and poor treatment are distressingly common amongst pregnant women admitted to hospitals and clinics. Migrant women who do not have documentation, or are unable to provide proof of residence or income in South Africa, are sometimes unable to qualify for low-cost medical treatment or face prohibitive costs at private clinics, and therefore go without basic health care.

Migrant women also experience gender-based discrimination and violence in South Africa:

I think the government doesn't [have] any issues with anybody who's got their papers. If you're a man the people are always scared of you. So I think if you are a man your life is much easier because if you walk in the street you're not scared of anybody. But when I walk around Hillbrow I always think, what if somebody grabs me and shoves me into a dark place and rapes me and things like that...what if these men – coming towards me. What if he takes my phone or rapes me or kills me for no reason, and I am always scared of those. In Zimbabwe rape cases are there but they're not much, they are not that high. It's three times rare to hear somebody has been raped but here you always hear rape times four, you see, and people shooting, they are always scared of those things (Interview 19).

Most are cautious about relationships with South African men, fearing a potential loss of independence and negative impacts on family and children at home:

It depends what type of guy is he, some of these guys take chances – they say the women from that side are soft. If you stay with him after 2 months he will start getting funny. When you ask, they will fight you. They are all not trustworthy. South African guys know how to abuse women (Focus Group 2 Participant).

[My boyfriend] is from that other side. I've got kids in Zimbabwe, so if I get a boyfriend here in South Africa, he'll force me to go and stay at his home and my kids will starve, from how I view it (Focus Group 5 Participant).

It's hard to get married here. We are scared to get married to South Africans. Let me say that, I'm scared of getting married to a South African, because I think that once you're married to him he might turn and say you're not from here, you're a kwerekwere from Zimbabwe (Focus Group 4 Participant).

Maybe when we're married and have bought [property] – he'll tell you to leave and go back to Zimbabwe and not take anything. Or that you're using his name to stay here permanently and get married. Suppose, maybe you're working. You sell, even if it's at the streets. That money will help you buy food in the house. You buy things for the house with that money. And when he doesn't want you anymore, he'll chase you out and tell you that you're a kwerekwere. So, you'll never get your things. Yes, you're a kwerekwere, right? So, you'll get nothing (Focus Group 4 Participant).

POLICY PERCEPTIONS

The women migrants were asked about how their negative experiences of migration could be improved. The cost and difficulty of obtaining visas was viewed as the main challenge:

It is not easy for women because migrating from region to region it is difficult. You have to have a certain amount of money, and that amount of money, they want to see it in the bank. They are specific. Like when I

came from Zimbabwe, I want to come this side, you have to have at least R1,000, which they want to see. If you don't have that money they can turn you back (Interview 43).

Yes, they say you must have money to enter and pay hotels. We can't afford it because we are poor. I can't get that money, that's why I sell doilies. Yes, it's difficult – sometimes they want R2,000 for you to enter this side. I can't afford to pay a hotel, I can't pay that money. It will be too much if they make that law (Interview 29).

To get a passport it's easy but to get a visa is too difficult... You have to have money, much money, you know like maybe R1,000 so it's too difficult for that...[Women] face problems of money like if there's no one helping them it's too difficult to raise that money to come here. It's so difficult (Interview 26).

Those unable to meet high visa costs feel they have no alternative but to cross clandestinely:

South Africa wants a visa from when you come from Zimbabwe. So to have a visa, you need to have money. So I couldn't because I didn't have money. I think the last time it was R1,000...It is difficult because women can't follow it. So you find that they risk their lives because they want to cross and come this side. You find that some even swim through the Limpopo River and get eaten by crocodiles when they come. Some of them die in the river because they want to come to this side. So I think it is difficult. At least if there were no visas it was going to be easy. Visa makes people suffer (Interview 28).

These laws make it too difficult for us to come this side. That is why we are using the border jumping method. It is the best method because with a visa, there are too many rules (Interview 34).

Many women felt that migrants would benefit from reduced restrictions on travel between South Africa and Zimbabwe. A large number suggested that visas should be scrapped altogether, and that migrants should be permitted to travel between countries using only a passport:

If they can cancel the visa so that all of us who come from outside the country can use passports only, not visas, because it is hard to get a visa... [The governments] can talk man-to-man and end what needs to be ended like in Botswana, we go there without visas...They can talk about visas, and each one of us must have a straight passport, because the passport is needed (Interview 23).

I think they should discontinue the use of visas so that a person who has only a passport should be allowed in to buy things because she is doing business...Because when I'm at home poor, not having anything and the children are crying, I would also wish to go where women go. I have to have a passport and a visa to cross the border gate (Interview 32).

I think if they can come here without using a visa it can be easier for them. They can manage to come here without a visa, using their own passport... If they can allow people to come here without visas, I think that is the best because most of the women, they come here for business. They go back to their country to sell their goods and everything so it's so difficult for someone without a visa to come here. (Interview 26).

As an alternative to eliminating visas, migrants suggested that they be allowed to stay in South Africa for longer periods of time:

For now it is hard because I have to go in and out. This doesn't excite me because the laws of migration say we have to enter this country with a visa. If it could be like in Botswana where we don't use the visa but now the visa in Zimbabwe is too expensive. And after we enter with the visa and we are given short days to stay here, so we are not able to do things because our days are short here and we have to go back home...They should increase the number of days. At least if they can give us three months in South Africa it would be better because within three months you can be able to come up with something. Then you can go back home (Interview 29).

Women said that if visa requirements were removed, they would likely travel home to Zimbabwe more regularly:

It is important for women to migrate easily because it's easy to move from one place to another after you have to stay here maybe for like a year,

before you go home to see the kids, if there wasn't the issue of visas. I think people would visit their families almost every day. Make it for people not to use a visa, just to use a passport. I believe many people here don't come and stay, they make business and go back. So for them to have visas every time, they don't come (Interview 50).

CONCLUSION

Relatively little qualitative contemporary research has been conducted on the experiences of migrant women in Southern Africa despite evidence that female migration is increasing dramatically.² Women in Southern Africa have often been portrayed as those "left behind," and as "passive rural widows who stayed put somewhere, practicing subsistence, and later, cash crop agricultural production while their men departed, perhaps never to return."³

The MVP confirmed that migration can be "an empowering experience for women."⁴ Women felt that they had benefitted from exposure to different languages and cultures, greater access to consumer goods, and a sense of independence and freedom. The families and households of women migrants also benefitted significantly, particularly through remittances which were largely used for basic necessities, including food, clothing and school fees.

At the same time, the interviews underscored a number of extremely negative aspects of migration for women. While those who travelled legally through established border posts described relatively few problems, those who "jumped the fence" faced a barrage of risks and rights abuses, including at the hands of paid guides, as well as police and security officials. However, faced with extreme poverty at home, travel documentation was viewed as prohibitively expensive, and irregular migration the only option.

Whatever their legal status, most migrant women in South Africa experience exclusion, harassment and verbal and physical abuse on a daily basis. They are also excluded from services such as healthcare, in spite of their constitutional right of access. In spite of the hardships they experience, most feel that migration is extremely important for women from Zimbabwe, and want fewer restrictions on travel. Given that women migrants want to travel through regular and legal means, and are willing to travel with passports,

adapting or eliminating visitor visa requirements for citizens of Zimbabwe would likely lead to more regularised travel overall.

NOTES

- 1 Department of Home Affairs, "Ministerial Committee of Enquiry into Recent Deaths at Lindela Holding Facility," Pretoria, 2005, p 7.
- 2 B. Dodson with H. Simelane, D. Tevera, T. Green, A. Chikanda and F. de Vletter, *Gender, Migration and Remittances in Southern Africa*, SAMP Migration Policy Paper No. 49, Cape Town, 2008.
- 3 C. Murray, *Families Divided: The Impact of Migrant Labour in Lesotho* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p.
- 4 Global Commission on International Migration, *Migration in an Interconnected World: New Directions for Action* (Geneva, 2005), p. 49.

UNDER THE BRIDGE

I come from Zimbabwe. I am 18 years old. I came to South Africa to find work because my father passed away. The situation chased me. I was starving because I needed to go to school but there is no money. I came here when I was only 17. My mother is alone so I just came here to support my mom and my young brothers and sisters. I wanted to help my mother. She is surviving by selling tomatoes, onions and dried fruit.

My mother told me that when you come to South Africa you must have a visa and a passport and money in your bank account. I didn't have any of these things so I jumped the fence. Actually I went under the bridge. It was at night when I crossed. It was very difficult because that place is dangerous. Some people are eaten by crocodiles in the Limpopo River. There were soldiers there but they didn't see us because we were hiding in the bush. There was no food. It was raining and we slept in the bush.

Some people come with the *malayisha* [guides] who carry you across borders. They risk their lives because they want to cross and come this side. You find that some even swim through the Limpopo River and get eaten by crocodiles when they come. I heard that someone I know has just vanished in the river. We hear from people that were with her that the crocodile caught her. All of this is because we must have visas. Visas make people suffer.

When I got to Johannesburg, I was trying to find a place to stay. I couldn't find a job because I couldn't find my relatives. I was just staying in the

street. My sister is here too and she sends money back to my mother. I send what I can. Sometimes I buy something like Vaseline and send it to home. I don't have money to buy papers here. They want about R400-R600. The police arrested me and took me to Lindela and after that to Zimbabwe. This has happened two times. They took me to Beit Bridge. I never reached home. As soon as they dropped me, I followed them back again to Johannesburg.



Chapter Twelve

Smuggling on the Zimbabwe-Mozambique Border

Nedson Pophiwa

Since 2000, cross-border smuggling has become a topical issue in Zimbabwe. The discovery of diamonds at Chiadzwa in the eastern highlands resulted in a diamond rush that saw local communities, as well as some outsiders, participating in the mining of diamonds, and foreign buyers coming in to provide a market for the precious stones. A few months later, the government moved in to regulate the mining and trading in diamonds by sealing the diamond fields with security details and setting up a buying post for the diamonds.¹ However, there were so many people already involved in the trade, that the state continues to battle with the smuggling of diamonds from the area. Part of the difficulty is that government officials themselves have reportedly been implicated in the trade.

In addition to diamond smuggling, there has also been extensive tobacco smuggling through the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border after a stalemate in price negotiations between the state and the growers of the crop. Mozambique was used as a route to export the crop to lucrative tobacco markets overseas.² Fish smuggling is another lucrative industry along the Zimbabwe-Zambia border. The big players in the kapenta fishing industry are alleged to smuggle millions of tonnes of fish annually from Lake Kariba into Zambia.³

Under the guise of protecting national sovereignty, the state has intensified border controls to prevent revenue loss due to smuggling. Cross-border traders and smugglers

oppose state controls partly because they perceive the border as artificial and partly because smuggling is a basic survival and livelihood strategy. Where the state has "impeded" the smooth operation of their smuggling activities, the communities have usually resisted in a non-confrontational manner. These responses, and the nature of interaction between the traders and the state, have determined the course and nature of clandestine cross-border activities.

This chapter explores the operation of smuggling on the border between Zimbabwe and Mozambique over the last decade. It also interrogates the perceptions of the state and borderland communities in a bid to understand the conflicting meanings and implications of "smuggling." The state's perceptions are highly ambivalent; smuggling seems to be legitimised and shunned at the same time. Hence, it is a question whether the state is always distant from clandestine activities that occur within the so-called "margins of the state" or if smuggling is not a form of statecraft in itself.

"SMUGGLING" AS A LIVELIHOOD

The conceptual grounding of smuggling as an informal economic activity is a crucial ingredient to understanding the contested perceptions of the Zimbabwean state and the border communities. The term "smuggling" itself is perceived as problematic by some researchers for it criminalizes activities that people engage in as a necessary livelihood strategy. The term "smuggling" is therefore inappropriate because it does not reflect the perspective of the communities involved in it.⁴ Hence, alternative terms have been proposed such as "second economy," "underground economy," "informal economic activities," and so on.⁵ The second economy has been defined as "a highly organised system of income-generating activities that deprive the state of taxation and foreign exchange... Some of these activities are illegal, others are legitimate themselves but carried out in a manner that avoids taxation."⁶ The type of clandestine activities that occur at the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border cannot be simply subsumed by the dictionary meaning of smuggling but should rather be viewed as a component of informal cross-border trade.

Smuggling on African borders is often seen as a product of the failure of the post-colonial African state to provide for national needs. The term smuggling has therefore

been seen as inappropriate because it is a legitimate response to the failure of the state to meet people's basic needs.⁷ As one commentator asserts, "although border residents are fully aware that according to state laws it is illegal for them to sneak goods around the customs post, they do not regard it as morally wrong for them to do so."⁸ This means that border residents believe that they have a right to move freely, and that guards are wrong to ask for bribes from them in the name of the state, for personal gain. The vocabulary for this kind of economic activity shows the acceptance, by the people, of smuggling as an important source of livelihood and wealth.⁹ While the state is deprived of revenue from duty and taxes, this is often the only meaningful economic enterprise that marginalised border residents can undertake.

Smuggling activities usually occur in situations where the border becomes an obstruction to the easy passage of commodities. The extent to which a border is, or might become, a barrier is usually a result of four interrelated factors: first, the natural features of the boundary can act as a barrier; second, government policies applied at the boundary itself can create a man-made physical barrier; third, the degree to which the legitimacy of the political border is accepted and internalised in the borderlands; and, above all, the cohesiveness of the culture groups through which the border is drawn (the consensual basis for the boundary).¹⁰ In the case of the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border, only the second factor (where border controls act as a barrier to the movement of goods and people) is relevant as a potential barrier. However, Zimbabwe's longest border with a neighbour remains open and largely uncontrolled, especially in areas where communities live astride the border.

The Penhalonga/Nyaronga crossing point between Zimbabwe and Mozambique was chosen for study precisely because this part of the border is guarded by border patrol teams from both countries and cross-border movement is regulated by the state, making smuggling a necessity for many. The Penhalonga and Nyaronga communities are relatively understudied areas, and there are no research works on movement along the border.¹¹ Oral interviews and oral histories with the people of Nyaronga and Penhalonga were collected. In addition to collecting oral testimony, the researcher observed smuggling activities in action. As Gaidzanwa has pointed out, "observation of actual traders in action could be more illuminating and a better basis for generating explanations and solutions for the issues that perplex governments and academics where cross-border trade is concerned."¹²

THE ZIMBABWE-MOZAMBIQUE BORDER

Local people have various perceptions of the nature of the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border. Firstly, the border is personified; it is given a human face. For many people, border posts and patrols are the border, for they epitomise the presence of the state and the dividing line between the countries. The guards determine whether the border is "hard" or "soft." The borderland residents are also "the border" because they know how to access the other side by circumventing the officers who patrol it; they have tactics and routes to avoid being caught. Because they have been living in this area for a long time, they utilise their knowledge by offering services to outsiders who want to cross the border clandestinely. They play the role of porters and tour guides charging their customers for the services rendered.

Secondly, the border is seen not so much as a line on the ground as a physical zone or landscape. This landscape determines what types of trade and interaction are possible across the border line. The physical landscape is also characterised by landmines, which deter movement. Though there have been exercises to remove landmines, there are still cases of border jumpers and villagers being killed or maimed by mine blasts.¹³ The general border zone is not navigable by car, so goods must be carried on foot. At the customs points cars can cross the border. Transporting goods by vehicle involves a much more sophisticated procedure which includes paperwork and larger bribes to customs officers.

Thirdly, people of a common culture and language live on both sides of the border, sharing intimate knowledge of the numerous bush trails connecting neighbouring markets and villages across the boundary. It is fascinating to note the continuities between Penhalonga and Nyaronga. The physical and human landscape, the climate, the crops that are grown (such as maize and groundnuts) and the common language and culture make the two areas virtually indistinguishable. The border is porous for the Nyaronga who cross daily to seek medical aid and to buy foreign products. Most of the children even go to Zimbabwean schools. Migration is encouraged by the lack of social infrastructure and marketing channels on the Mozambican side, and the physical proximity of the Zimbabwean services, especially for those living in Nyaronga and the neighbouring Chadzuca Valley.

But such porous borders are generally characterised by "neglect and remarkable absence of governmental efforts to integrate the border-located communities into larger

societies.”¹⁴ When it comes to crossing the borders with commodities for sale or resale, the border officers, particularly Zimbabwean officers, restrict the quantity of goods and sometimes confiscate them. As a preventive measure, traders try to steer clear of the police by diverting their goods away from the official entry point along the border.

THE RISE OF SMUGGLING

Smuggling on the border between Zimbabwe and Mozambique probably began when the border was demarcated in the colonial era. However, it has undergone a significant transformation over the years, involving intensified participation by many different players, both from the borderlands and other parts of the country.

During the early years of the independence period, cross-border activities were less significant. In the early 1990s, there was a mostly “one-way” border crossing trend dominated by Mozambicans who came to Zimbabwe to acquire goods and services. Mozambicans crossed the border in large numbers twice: in 1987, as refugees, when Renamo occupied Southern Manica Province; and in 1991-2, when famine worsened the living conditions of civilians. Then it was common to see the Zimbabwean police screening “illegal” Mozambicans in Mutare. However, refugees did not flee into Penhalonga *en masse*. Some relocated with their families to settle independently within the area, and were mostly self-employed. The majority of refugees moved into Chipinge (at Tongogara) and Kaerezi in Nyanga.

In the early 1990s, the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) contributed to the development of informal cross-border trade in Zimbabwe. Liberalization culminated in the entrance of unregulated products and competitors that killed local infant industries. Many people, especially women, turned to cross-border trade to supplement their household incomes. As in West Africa, “structural adjustment ... created a general environment of disarray throughout the official economy which has contributed greatly to the growth of transborder trading opportunities.”¹⁵ Despite the fact that the government later abandoned the SAP, many of Zimbabwe’s subsequent economic problems originate in the failure of this reform programme.¹⁶

The state also inadvertently fuelled the smuggling of commodities across the border. Protectionism in Zimbabwe provided a direct incentive for smuggling. In the textile industry,

for example, the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority imposed prohibitive duty charges on bales of second-hand clothes which reduced the profitability of the trade. For a bale of second-hand clothes US\$20 (\$5000) per kilogramme was charged plus Value Added Tax (VAT) at 15% and Surtax at 15%. This meant that bales were cheap only when they were smuggled. Locally-made clothes were more expensive than imports by a wide margin and were not affordable to the majority of people.

One Zimbabwean commentator saw protectionism as one of the factors that pushed smuggling to unprecedented levels:

Zimbabwean price controls imposed on basic foods, such as cooking oil, salt, etc. have made it cheaper to buy these products there, and have provided an incentive for traders to smuggle goods across the border, which the Zimbabwean authorities say is fuelling local shortages while avoiding customs controls. The scale of the smuggling has reportedly led to the sales of more expensive Mozambican-produced sugar dropping significantly.¹⁷

Smuggling was thus a reaction by the communities astride the border to the harsh economic environment that prevailed in Zimbabwe. Cross-border trade emerged as a coping mechanism for Zimbabweans, especially women.¹⁸ This was consistent with what had happened elsewhere on the continent: "At the popular level, the strangulation of popular livelihoods in the context of rising unemployment and nose-diving real incomes have encouraged increased participation in transborder activities as a means of income generation. The same processes have encouraged official complicity with transborder activities, as officials of all ranks struggle for survival, or just try to profit from the confusion."¹⁹

Initially, smuggling was just one of many livelihood strategies. Some people worked for companies within the area and either panned gold during the weekends or smuggled commodities across the border. One informant explained: "I work for a sawmill factory but during the weekends I go to Manica to buy goods for resale or sometimes to pan gold. There are Zimbabweans who have been going there since late 2006 and I have been there several times."²⁰ Gold panning was also rife in some parts of Nyaronga, an enterprise shared with Mozambicans.

Smuggling was adopted because it was a meaningful way of gaining a livelihood. They did not smuggle because they wished to sell illegal goods, but because there was no better way of earning a living. They also wanted to avoid the border guards, not necessarily just avoid high tariffs. One interviewee stated that she never wanted to see the patrol officers because “the guards at the border are ruthless, you will not pass through them without leaving something for them so it is better to avoid confrontation with them.”²¹ People were conscious of the border but did not acknowledge it. It made no sense for them to get authorisation through tedious paperwork just to buy goods from a shop that was thirty minutes away: “It makes no sense for me to get a passport first, and then apply for a visa, so that I can go to Nyaronga where I can easily walk on foot. Maybe they should do that for you people coming from Harare, not us.”²²

TRAVERSING THE BORDER

The late 1990s witnessed a sharp increase in traders from Penhalonga traversing the border, often under the cover of darkness, with a variety of Zimbabwean manufactured goods for sale. Among the goods that were informally exchanged by the communities were sugar, maize, dried fish, beef, groundnuts, Irish potatoes, beans and vegetables. Other goods traded included beer, shoes, wood products, building materials, bicycles, cycle and car parts, and electrical goods. In most cases, the commodities that were in short supply on either side of the border were what the traders specialized in. The Mozambicans bought sugar whilst Zimbabweans wanted cooking oil for resale back home where it was scarce. Traders from Penhalonga crossed the border with sugar and returned with bars of washing soap which were in short supply and had become a lucrative commodity for resale.

Participants were of all ages. One informant described his first experience of border-crossing as a young child:

My first time to cross the border was in 1997 with my older sister. I was in grade four then at the age of ten. We took a crate of soft drinks to Nyaronga where we would supply one of the shops there. That experience was tough for me because I was young and frail so I never went back until when I was sixteen and I had completed school. From then I have been going to Manica to buy shoes for resale.²³

Another elderly woman who had been vending vegetables in Penhalonga, said she realized that there was a greater chance of making more money by exporting goods which Mozambicans came to Zimbabwe to buy:

We used to scoff at the Sena from Nyaronga and other parts of Mozambique when they came to buy commodities such as soap here in Penhalonga. There were shortages of such things in Mozambique because of the disruptions caused by the civil war. Penhalonga therefore served most of the area close to Manica. So when people began to cross the border, I also joined my friends and we began to sell sugar there. We would buy the sugar from our local shops in Penhalonga but eventually when sugar became a problem we would go to queue for it in Mutare. It paid well in Mozambique.²⁴

The growth in smuggling happened almost automatically as traders responded to market demands, in this case for sugar in Mozambique. Some informants said that they had joined their peers in smuggling after being invited and given insights into the commodities needed across the border. Information on what commodities were in demand, and their prices, was readily available.

Sugar was the most common article of trade. Tonnes of sugar found their way across the Penhalonga/Nyaronga crossing point over time. It even became difficult to find sugar in stores in Penhalonga. By 2000, the media was reporting shortages of sugar in Zimbabwean shops as the commodity was being hoarded and smuggled out of the country. Zimbabwean sugar was cheaper than Mozambican-manufactured sugar and was in particularly high demand at the Manica market, where buyers resold it in Beira about 250km away. The demand for sugar was high in Mozambique because it was used to brew beer.

Mealie meal was also an important item of exchange, especially when drought-stricken Mozambican villages were in need of food. Ironically, Zimbabwe often experienced the same situation, but when people got a chance to smuggle, maize-meal was amongst the commodities that paid well. One illuminating report described smuggling activities along Mangwe, a crossing point on the border:

On average, a single man transporter in Mangwe, a small settlement that now resembles a depot, carries 5 tonnes of the Parlenta and Silo brands

smuggled from Zimbabwe. Smuggling has become an industry in Mutare and Mangwe, with thousands of people on both sides of the border literally living on it. Houses in Mangwe have been turned into warehouses where smugglers forward them to Manica in Beira for sale.²⁵

The medium of exchange was not hard currency, due to the fact that the Zimbabwean dollar was weaker than the Mozambican metecais on the parallel money market. This meant it would cost more for a trader from Zimbabwe to convert from dollars to metecais. The best option was to cross the border with commodities to sell to the Mozambicans and use the metecais to buy commodities that were sold there.

The Penhalonga traders imported cooking oil and bars of soap from Manica. Because these two commodities were very scarce in the Zimbabwean countryside, informal cross-border traders made a significant income from importing them. However, because of their weight, boxes of soap could not be carried in bulk up the mountain; usually a maximum of three boxes could be carried by an individual. If the consignment was large, porters in the nearby Muzuri village were hired to carry the goods up the mountain.

STATE RESPONSES TO SMUGGLING

In West Africa, the attitude of the state towards cross-border trade and smuggling has been described as follows:

The state itself is more a collaborator than an opponent in the game of transborder trade. First of all, successful accumulation through transborder channels is highly dependent on connections and collaboration with state officials. Pure evasion of state controls and border posts defines the activities of small-time operators where quantities are small enough to allow concealment, or where the economic and political clout of the actor is feeble enough to acquire it. A second level of state involvement relates to the role of the state as arbiter of the distribution of rents from illicit activities. In the context of declining state control of resources for patronage and for social welfare provision, allowing certain groups to participate in, or even monopolise, various lines of parallel economic activity remains an important means of maintaining loyalty.²⁶

In other words, the state is never resolute in its "opposition" to illicit cross-border trade.

In 2006, the Zimbabwean Taskforce on Tourism, Image Building and Communication expressed alarm at the levels of smuggling along the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border. The chairman of the Taskforce exclaimed that they had underestimated the level of smuggling of goods along the eastern border areas and that "this vice is crippling our economy. The best way of dealing with this vice is to hit at the brains behind the syndicates."²⁷ That was how official perceptions of smuggling defied and denied local community agency. However, the government did allow special treatment to borderland communities:

These [communities] are allowed to travel in and out of the country, visiting nearby villages along the border. They are not allowed to buy goods for resale, but for their consumption only. They do have special treatment because they are allowed to visit their kinsmen on the other side of the border without passports.²⁸

However, when it came to crossing the borders with commodities for resale, the Zimbabwean police restricted the quantity of goods and sometimes confiscated them.

In April 2001, there was pandemonium when the police descended on several wholesale outlets and supermarkets, arresting those with large quantities of essential commodities:

On Tuesday and Wednesday last week the police raided several wholesalers in the city and rounded up those found with large quantities of goods. The goods, which included sugar, maize, maize-meal, canned beer, cooking oil, tomatoes, matches and bread, are piled high at Mutare Central Police Station for auction. While residents and businesspeople interviewed said they supported the police crackdown on smuggling, they complained about the alleged random and indiscriminate manner of the exercise.²⁹

The media reported again in 2004 on growing tension between Zimbabwean soldiers and traders in the border areas.

At the height of the maize shortages in 2005, the state blamed smugglers for the situation. The Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) warned smugglers by quoting Sec-

tion 182 of the Customs and Excise Exchange Act which states that “any person who smuggles any goods shall be guilty of an offence and liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years.”³⁰ The Commissioner General of ZIMRA was quoted as saying that: “While our government has put in place initiatives to import enough grain to feed the nation using scarce foreign currency, unscrupulous individuals who are bent on lining their pockets, are busy smuggling maize and other basic commodities into neighbouring countries.”³¹

The state did not only pay lip service to the threat that “unscrupulous individuals” would be “dealt with.” Cross-border traders operating in 2004 and 2006 remember the experiences of Grand Reef Battalion and Operation Sunrise in those years. In February 2004 and subsequent months, soldiers moved into the border regions to catch smugglers. Those who were caught were taken to Grand Reef Battalion some twenty kilometres out of Penhalonga on the Zimbabwean side. All traders caught carrying sugar were arrested on the spot. A truck would ferry them to Grand Reef where they would be detained for hours. Eventually they would be charged with smuggling, receiving corporal punishment before being asked to pay about Z \$30,000 (US \$10) in fines.

One female respondent explained that corporal punishment made the operation more effective as a deterrent because the soldiers were not demanding money even in the form of bribes. Though she did not know the number of people who were caught, she described it as the day on which she herself almost quit smuggling sugar and mealie-meal. “On that day I saw women being beaten up by border guards for the first time in my life. I was one of them. It was so painful that I swore I would never step foot on the border again.”³² She only resumed four months later towards year end when the operation had ceased and the situation had calmed down.

In 2006, the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe implemented a currency change programme in the country. Project Sunrise, as it was called, was meant to distribute and facilitate the changeover from the old currency to a new currency of the Zimbabwean dollar. The police were to play an important role by ensuring that people did not move around with large sums of cash on them in a bid to off-load it elsewhere since the banks had been given a daily maximum deposit which was quite low.

The police manned roadblocks for the entire month of August 2006, searching vehicles, bags and bodies on all main roads in the country. Project Sunrise had positive

results for the state but for the traders it meant several more months of disruption in their trade. The loss was huge and some people were still trying in 2007 to raise money to recapitalize their small businesses. For a time the state demonstrated that it had the capacity to control the border should the need arise. Even the border residents of Penha-longa said that they had never seen border guards descend on smugglers of cash with the viciousness that they exhibited in that month: "It was a no-go-area. I did not attempt to cross into Mozambique. But some of my colleagues were unfortunate because they travelled during that time and were arrested."³³

CONCLUSION

The economic hardships that prevail on the Zimbabwean side of the border have pushed many into moving goods across the border to find alternative sources of income. Smuggling is a well-organized enterprise. It is both a survival strategy and a lucrative trade that improves the well-being of the actors involved. The boundary communities of Penha-longa and Nyaronga use the border as an asset for survival. Their smuggling activities are a response to state mechanisms that restrict the movement of commodities between the two countries.

The very existence of the border thus provides people with the opportunity to make a living through circumventing it. If the border was impervious, or effectively patrolled, or if the periodic draconian actions of the state were sustained, then smuggling would be a much riskier and less common enterprise. But it is none of these things. Smuggling occurs precisely because the border is permeable and the border guards can be avoided. And the major reason for this is that the border tries to divide the indivisible. Communities on either side of the border are so similar and the border zone is so well-known by both that the clandestine movement of goods is constrained only by the amounts that can be carried on foot. State crackdowns have done nothing to stop the constant movement of people backwards and forwards in search of commodities to resell in order to make a livelihood. Border controls merely influence the manner in which traders smuggle goods across the border.

NOTES

- 1 The Government launched Operation Chikorokoza Chapera to fight illegal mining and trading in minerals in November 2006. The exercise caused disruptions to registered small mine owners who were forced to close during the period. Although approximately twenty-thousand mineral miners were caught, the smuggling did not end.
- 2 *Sunday Mail* 11 March 2007. There have been reports of raw tobacco smuggling to Mozambique as well; *The Herald* 22 April 2003.
- 3 Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, *Forms of Foreign Currency Leakages in the Economy, Supplement to the First Half 2006 Monetary Policy Review Statement* – delivered by Dr Gideon Gono, Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, July 2006. Part of the statement read, “Zimbabwean fishermen meet with their Zambian counterparts in the midst of the lake Kariba to exchange fish for foreign currency. There are allegations that some officials responsible for policing the lake are soliciting bribes in foreign currency from fishermen.”
- 4 See, for example, A. Hortsmann, “Incorporation and Resistance: Borderlands, Transnational Communities and Social Change in Southeast Asia” Working Paper, Transnational Communities Programme, University of Oxford, 2002.
- 5 See also J. MacGaffey, “How to Become Rich and Survive Amidst Devastation: The Second Economy in Zaire” *African Affairs* 82(328) (1983): 351-66; K. Emizet, “Confronting Leaders at the Apex of the State: The Growth of the Unofficial Economy in Congo” *African Studies Review* 41(1) (1998): 99-137; E. Tagliacozzo, *Secret Trades, Porous Borders: Smuggling and States along a Southeast Asian Frontier, 1865-1915* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2005).
- 6 Quoted in D. Flynn, “‘We are the Border:’ Identity, Exchange and the State along the Benin-Nigeria Border” *American Ethnologist* 24(2) (1997), p. 324.
- 7 *Ibid*, p. 326.
- 8 *Ibid*.
- 9 *Ibid*, p. 324.
- 10 D. Collins, “Partitioned Culture Areas and Smuggling: The Hausa and Groundnut Trade Across the Nigeria-Niger Boundary up to the 1970s” In A. Asiwaju, ed., *Partitioned Africans: Ethnic Relations Across Africa’s International Boundaries 1884-1984* (London: C. Hurst and Co, 1985), p. 196.
- 11 D. Hughes, “Refugees and Squatters: Immigration and Territorial Politics on the Zimbabwe-Mozambique Border” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 25(4) (1999): 533-52.
- 12 R. Gaidzanwa, “Cross-Border Trade in Southern Africa: A Gendered Perspective” In L. Sachikonye, ed., *Labour Markets and Migration Policy in Southern Africa* (Harare: SAPES Books, 1998), p. 84.

- 13 M. Rupiah, "A Historical Study of Land-Mines in Zimbabwe, 1963-1995" *Zambezia* 2(1) (1995), p. 74.
- 14 Collins, "Partitioned Culture Areas," p. 197.
- 15 K. Meagher, "A Backdoor to Globalization? Structural Adjustment, Globalization and Trans-border Trade in West Africa" *Review of African Political Economy* 30(95) (2003), p. 61.
- 16 A. Mlambo, *The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme: The Case of Zimbabwe 1990-1995* (Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1997).
- 17 *The Herald* 22 June 2004.
- 18 E. Chipembere, "Cross-border Trade: A Coping Mechanism Adopted by Zimbabweans – A Case Study of Harare 1980-1999" B.A. Honours Dissertation, University of Zimbabwe, p. 9.
- 19 Meagher, "A Backdoor to Globalization," p. 61.
- 20 Interviewed at Tsvingwe, Penhalonga, 7 July 2007.
- 21 Interview at Tsvingwe, Penhalonga, 27 December 2006.
- 22 Interview at Tsvingwe, Penhalonga, 27 December 2006.
- 23 Interview at Tsvingwe, Penhalonga, 7 July 2007.
- 24 Interview at Matimati Store Vegetable Market, Penhalonga, 26 February 2007.
- 25 *The Herald* 12 December 2005.
- 26 Meagher, "A Backdoor to Globalization," p. 67.
- 27 *Manica Post* 15 September 2006.
- 28 Interview with Inspector B. Makomeke, Zimbabwe Republic Police, Press and Public Relations Department, Mutare, 6 July 2007.
- 29 *Daily News* 10 April 2001.
- 30 *The Herald* 20 March 2006.
- 31 *The Chronicle* 6 April 2006.
- 32 Interview at Chikanga, Mutare, 22 December 2007.
- 33 Interview at Liverpool Compound, Penhalonga, 28 February 2007.

ROUGH TREATMENT

I am 50 something. I have seven kids. The things is you can't get some of the things you need in Zimbabwe and they're hungry. When I go home from this side I've got food and clothes for my kids, everything. When I go home with the money and clothes I got here, I can stay there. When I am here, I sell doilies.

I started coming here first to sell tomatoes and vegetables. I stay here for 2-3 weeks and then I return to Zimbabwe for 3 months. Before I return, I buy rice and cooking oil and soup to take back. I buy the cotton in Zimbabwe and I crochet doilies and then I come here to sell them.

When I come here they sometimes treat me rough at the border. Sometimes they give you no problems. Other times they harass you. It depends on the person at the border but you know you are going to have to pay when they put your things on the scale. They don't want you to sell your things in South Africa. If you don't have money to bribe them, they take some of your doilies. They ask for too much these days - R100, R200, R600 - so I don't have the money to pay the bribe. So they take my stuff and that's a problem so sometimes I have to go back home.

In Zimbabwe there are no jobs. My husband is not working. That is why I make the doilies and sell them here. If you work hard you will get anything. If you are coming here to work hard and not look for boyfriends, you will help yourself. I've learned so many languages. I only used to speak my

mother tongue but now I know a little bit of se Sotho, se Tswana, isiXhosa and isiZulu. It's very interesting even though I did it to earn money.



Chapter Thirteen

Migrant Remittances and Household Survival in Zimbabwe

Daniel Tevera, Jonathan Crush and Abel Chikanda

While there is a general consensus that remittance flows to and within Africa are increasing, little attention has been paid to the impact of these transfers on poverty alleviation, primarily because of data deficiencies at the household level. Despite their obvious magnitude, accurate data on remittance flows to Zimbabwe is unavailable or inaccessible.¹ Data on remittances sent through formal channels is extremely difficult to obtain. In addition, massive flows of remittances through informal channels go unrecorded. In an attempt to address these data deficiencies, SAMP devised the household-level Migration and Remittances Survey (MARS) which was administered in several SADC countries, including Zimbabwe.² The data generated by MARS is critical in at least three ways: First, it quantifies the largely hidden economic value of labour migration from Zimbabwe. Secondly, it provides information on the significance of remittances to economic survival in a state undergoing massive economic contraction. Thirdly, it provides information on the relationship between remittances and poverty alleviation at the household level.

Systematic sampling was used to randomly identify over 700 migrant-sending Zimbabwean households. The households provided information on some 3,536 members, including over 800 migrants. Using the MARS data, this chapter examines the volume of flows into Zimbabwe from a variety of migrant destinations. The limited use of the formal banking system for remitting and the predominance of informal remittance

channels is clearly evident. This chapter also examines how remittance flows (volumes, channels and frequency) are affected by differences in country of destination, gender, skills level and occupation. Finally, the chapter shows the critical importance of remittances to household livelihoods and survival in contemporary Zimbabwe.

REMITTANCE CHANNELS

The vast majority of Zimbabwean migrants regularly send back remittances in cash and/or kind. Indeed, the figure is so high that earning money to remit is clearly a major motivator for migration in the first place. In the year prior to the MARS study, three-quarters of migrant-sending households received remittances. Migrants sent home R2,759 per annum on average. Most migrants send money home on a regular basis. In the survey, 62 percent of households said they receive money at least once a month (Table 13.1). Another 25 percent receive money at least once or twice every three months and 7 percent once or twice a year. There was a positive correlation between the amount remitted and the frequency of remitting (Table 13.1). Migrants who send money home more frequently remit more on average than those who remit less often. Those who remit twice or more a month, for example, send back an average R3,716 over the year compared with R1,236 from those who remit only once a year.

Table 13.1: Annual Remittances by Frequency of Remitting

	No. of Households	% of Households	Mean (R)
Twice or more per month	97	13.0	3,717
Once a month	370	49.3	3,253
More than twice in three months	66	8.8	2,208
Once in three months	122	16.3	1,563
Once every six months	34	4.5	1,488
Once a year	19	2.5	1,236
At end of the contract	2	0.3	683
Other	30	4.0	2,409
Don't know	10	0.7	2,130

N = 750

Migrants use many different channels to send remittances home. There is a basic distinction between formal channels (including money transfer services by banks and non-bank financial institutions such as foreign exchange bureaus or dedicated money transfer operators) and informal channels (which include the hand carrying of cash by migrants or their family and friends, as well as transfers through unregulated money transfer operators). Zimbabwean migrants prefer trusted informal channels over banks or formal money transfer operators such as Western Union and Moneygram. Almost half of the households reported that migrants either bring cash with them when they return home to visit the family (35 percent) or send remittances via friends and coworkers (11 percent). Another informal, less reliable, method used by a few is transport by taxi drivers. In terms of formal channels, around a quarter (26 percent) said they send funds via a bank in Zimbabwe and 14.5 percent use the Post Office (Table 13.2).

Table 13.2: Main Remittance Channels

Method of Transfer	No. of Remitters	%
Bring in person	320	34.6
Bank in Zimbabwe	237	25.6
Post Office	134	14.5
Friend/Coworker	102	11.0
Taxi	26	2.8
Bank in South Africa	12	1.3
Bus	1	0.1
Other	91	9.8
Don't know	2	0.2

N = 923

The problems experienced in money transfers varied with the type of method used. Excessive charges were associated with the use of banks and the Post Office. On the other hand, sending the money via a friend or a coworker was seen as slow and unreliable and the money was more likely to be lost or stolen. Bringing the money home personally was more reliable but theft was also a problem and there can be long delays for the household unless the migrant travels home regularly.

The amount of money personally brought by migrants on their last visit home also varied, although very few (only 5 percent) came home empty-handed. The majority (60 percent) only managed to bring home less than R90 (Table 13.3). Fewer than 10 percent brought more than R450. Decisions about how much to remit, how often and through what channels are generally made by the migrant. However, households are in regular contact with their migrant members by phone and frequently send requests for assistance. Nearly 80 percent of the households reported that migrants can be relied on to send emergency remittances most or all of the time. Only 3 percent said they can rarely, if ever, rely on remittances from their migrants when they ask.

Table 13.3: Amount Brought Home on Last Visit

Value in Rand	No.	%
None	25	5.0
R1-91	299	60.2
R92-182	27	5.4
R183-273	28	5.6
R274-364	8	1.6
R365-455	7	1.4
R456-546	5	1.0
>R547	42	8.5

N = 441

While remittances generally involve cash transfers, shortages of basic commodities in Zimbabwe encourage migrants to purchase goods abroad and bring them home when they visit. Almost two-thirds of the surveyed households had received remittances in the form of goods in the year prior to the survey. The most common non-cash remittances include foodstuffs (for example, maize-meal, sugar, salt, and cooking oil) as well as consumer goods such as bicycles, radios, sofas, agricultural inputs and building materials. Most non-cash remitting is based on the specific and immediate needs of the recipients. When the country faces shortages of basic commodities, non-cash remittances in the form of food tend to increase. Most goods are brought

home by the migrants themselves when they come to visit (Table 13.4). Some send goods via mail or with a friend or coworker. Very few use public transportation services such as buses or rail. In most cases, the value of the goods brought home on the most recent occasion was under R200, although a few brought goods valued at over R550 (Table 13.5).

Table 13.4: Preferred Methods of Remitting Goods

Preferred Method	No.	%
Bring in person	454	60.5
Mail	89	11.9
Friend/Coworker	78	10.4
Bus	40	5.3
Send home with visiting family members	30	4.0
Taxi	11	1.5
Rail	8	1.1
Other	40	5.3

N = 830

Table 13.5: Value of Goods Brought Home

Value in Rand	No.	%
None	32	6.7
R1-91	80	16.8
R92-182	249	52.3
R183-273	8	1.7
R274-364	5	1.1
R365-455	7	1.5
R456-546	1	0.2
> R547	33	6.9
Other	61	12.8

N = 476

WHO REMITS WHAT?

Various factors influence the amounts remitted by individual migrants. For instance, heads of households remit more cash (R3,726) than their children (R2,311). Men (R2,872) remit slightly more than women (R2,612) – an indication of greater labour market access and higher earning potential in destination countries. Those in the 40-59 age group remit more on average (R5,365) than migrants in any other age category (probably because they have the greatest number of dependants). Married migrants remit more on average (R3,176) than those who are still single (R1,924). Migrants overseas remit more on average than those within Southern Africa (within the region, the largest remitters are in Botswana followed by Zambia and South Africa) (Table 13.6).

Table 13.6: Annual Remittances by Migrant Destination

Place of Work	No.	Mean (R)
Botswana	120	3,433
Zambia	16	1,877
South Africa	245	1,808
Malawi	7	1,744
Namibia	10	1,600
Mozambique	38	1,565
Non-SADC	313	3,503

However, the relationship is not a simple one. Professional workers, on average, send the most money back to Zimbabwe, followed by self-employed entrepreneurs, office workers and managers (Table 13.7). Surprisingly, unskilled manual workers (at R2,472 p.a.) remit more, on average, than health workers (R2,369), skilled manual workers (R1,952), teachers (R1,728), domestic workers (R1,633), mineworkers (R1,598), farmworkers (R1,376) and service workers (R1,187). There are two possible explanations for this. First, most unskilled manual workers are employed in the construction industry where wages are low but employment is relatively easy to come by. In addition, living costs are low since most stay in informal settlements. Secondly, some skilled workers (such as teach-

ers and health professionals) are more likely to have family members staying with them. Unsurprisingly, the lowest remitters of any occupation group were security workers (who are notoriously underpaid in South Africa – the single most common destination country for Zimbabwean migrants) who remit R209 on average (with a maximum of R364).

Table 13.7: Annual Cash Remittances by Occupation

Main Occupation	Mean (R)	Minimum (R)	Maximum (R)
Professional worker	6,043	0.5	91,082
Business (self-employed)	4,136	9	35,522
Office worker	3,598	36	72,866
Employer/Manager	3,387	546	6,831
Managerial office worker	3,166	9	17,943
Unskilled manual worker	2,472	18	10,930
Health worker	2,369	36	9,108
Informal sector producer	2,219	73	18,216
Skilled manual worker	1,952	18	7,287
Teacher	1,728	5	10,930
Trader/Hawker/Vendor	1,703	4	63,758
Domestic worker	1,663	109	7,651
Mineworker	1,598	109	5,465
Foreman	1,591	73	4,554
Farmworker	1,376	109	3,188
Police/Military	1,275	455	2,732
Service worker	1,187	18	5,465
Security personnel	209	55	364
Other	1,766	91	9,108
Total	2,723	0.5	91,082

The general skill levels of migrants make some difference to remitting behaviour (Table 13.8). Skilled Zimbabweans, for example, remit larger sums on average than unskilled and semi-skilled migrants. There is no significant difference, however, between skilled and other migrants in the frequency of remitting (with around two-thirds of both

groups remitting at least once a month.) Perhaps more surprising, there is also little difference in remitting frequency between migrants working within SADC and those outside the region (around 60 percent in both cases remit at least once a month). The extremely high frequency of remittances is clearly a function of the need of Zimbabwean households for very regular infusions of remittance income in order to survive.

Table 13.8: Annual Cash Remittances by Skill Level

	Mean (R)	Minimum (R)	Maximum (R)
Skilled/Professional migrants	3,686	0.5	91,082
Semi-skilled/Unskilled	1,712	4.0	63,758
Total	2,760	0.5	91,082
N=	398	352	750

REMITTANCES AND LIVELIHOODS

Remittances are extremely important to household survival and sustainability in Zimbabwe. Over 90 percent of household members surveyed said that migrancy had a positive or very positive effect and less than 1 percent saw the effect as negative or very negative. Nearly 90 percent regarded remittances as important or very important for household food security and 76 percent in providing money for medicine or medical treatment (Table 13.9). As noted earlier, the vast majority of migrant-sending households receive cash and in-kind remittances. No other source of income comes close in terms of the proportion of households that benefit. For example, despite the overall significance of informal sector trade, only 15 percent of households generate income this way. A mere 6 percent receive income from the sale of farm products.

Though the average income earned from formal business (R5,738 per household), informal business (R4,463) and wage work (R3,917) is more important than remittances in either cash (R2,641) or goods (R1,275) (Table 13.10), when the median values are calculated, remittances are second only to wage work. When the weighted value of household income sources is calculated, cash remittances become the major source of total income (R597,865) for the households in the study, followed by wage work (R465,613) and remittance goods (R197,193).³

Table 13.9: Perceived Importance of Remittances to Household

	Important		Neutral		Unimportant	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Enough food to eat	586	88.5	51	7.7	25	3.8
Enough clean water for home use	389	59.8	147	22.6	115	17.7
Medicine or medical treatment	491	75.9	89	13.8	67	10.4
Electricity in home	414	64.5	120	18.7	108	16.8
Enough fuel to cook food	359	57.2	150	23.9	119	18.9

N = 586

Table 13.10: Household Income

Source of Income	No. of Households Receiving Income from Source	% of Households Receiving Income from Source	Mean Annual Household Income (R) from Source	Median Annual Household Income (R) from Source	Weighted Total Income of All Households (R) from Source
Wage work	355	43	3,898	1,312	465,613
Casual work	65	9	1,404	364	23,681
Remittances — money	547	78	2,672	1,093	597,865
Remittances — goods	433	61	1,239	455	197,193
Sale of farm products	45	6	970	228	10,292
Formal business	62	9	5,748	137	8,471
Informal business	105	15	4,477	638	66,946
Pension/disability	48	7	857	223	10,748
Gifts	35	5	345	91	3,188

N = 712

The importance of remittances can also be assessed through their contribution to various basic household expenditure categories. Expenses largely covered by remittances included gifts, entertainment, building, clothes, transportation, education, housing, medical expenses and food and groceries (Figure 13.1).

Households also perceive remittances as vital to their livelihood needs. Remittances were seen as important or very important to the satisfaction of most household needs

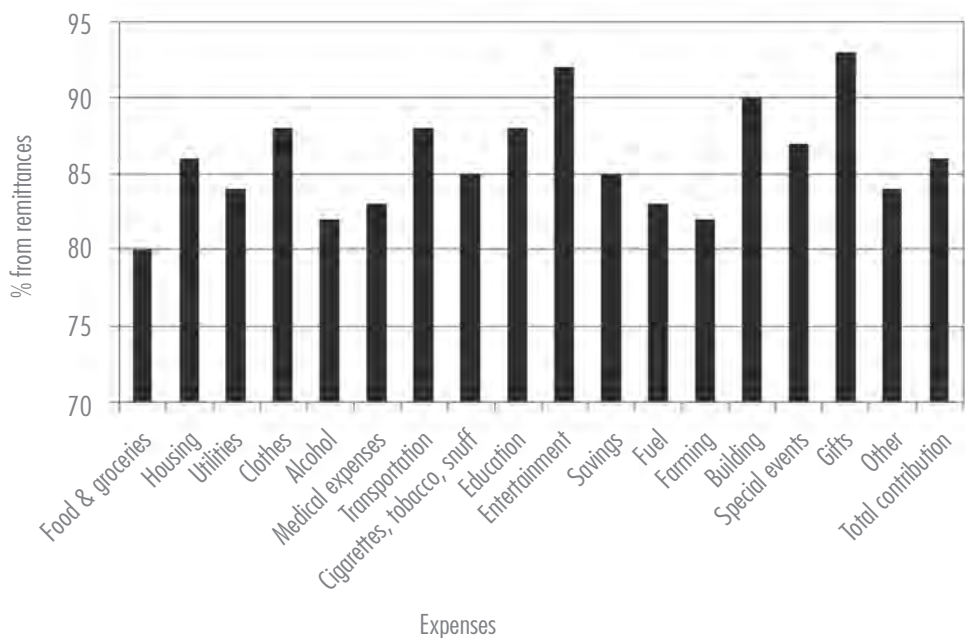


Figure 13.1: Average Share of Expenses Paid from Remittances

by the vast majority of households (Table 13.11). These needs included school fees, purchase of goods for resale, and funeral costs (97 percent said they were important or very important to meeting these needs), food (96 percent), building materials (96 percent), vehicle purchase and maintenance (95 percent), fuel (92 percent) and clothing (86 percent). Remittances were also important to the large majority of those households engaged in farming activity.

The most widespread use of remittances was to buy food (by 67 percent of households averaging R938 per household), clothing (by 49 percent of households averaging R455 per household) and to pay for school fees (by 48 percent averaging R492) (Table 13.12). Domestic building materials were another common expense (by 49 percent of households averaging R738 per household) as were transportation costs (fuel and fares). The use of remittances to generate further income was not common although 27 percent of households used remittances to support food production and 12 percent purchased goods for re-sale. About 16 percent saved a portion of their remittances and 5 percent bought insurance policies. Nine percent spent remittances on funeral and burial policies and 8 percent on funerals – a clear indicator of the impact of HIV/AIDS.

Table 13.11: Perceived Importance of Remittances to Household

	Important		Neutral		Unimportant		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Pay school fees	307	96.6	9	2.8	2	0.6	318	100
Buy food	397	96.2	15	3.6	1	0.2	413	100
Buy clothing	250	85.6	40	13.7	2	0.7	292	100
Farming activities	141	90.4	15	9.6	-	-	156	100
Fares	136	87.2	18	11.5	2	1.3	156	100
Buy fuel	34	91.9	2	5.4	1	2.7	37	100
Vehicle costs	41	95.3	2	4.7	-	-	43	100
Buy goods for resale	69	97.2	1	1.4	1	1.4	71	100
Buy building materials	116	95.9	3	2.5	2	1.7	121	100
Funeral/Burial policies	38	86.4	4	9.1	2	4.5	44	100
Funeral costs	43	97.7	1	2.3	-	-	44	100

Table 13.12: Expenditure of Remittances

	No. of Households Incurring Expense	% of Households Incurring Expense	Average Amount Spent (R)
School fees	342	48.5	493
Food	472	67.0	936
Clothing	346	49.1	459
Farming activities	189	26.8	530
Fares	205	29.1	319
Fuel	47	6.7	480
Vehicle costs	50	7.1	2,053
Purchase goods for sale	87	12.3	2,114
Repay loans	22	3.1	793
Labour costs	20	2.8	437
Building materials	349	49.5	740
Savings	114	16.2	1,698
Insurance policies	33	4.7	2,393
Funeral and burial policies	61	8.7	347
Funeral	55	7.8	119

N = 704

Households in the rural and urban areas of Zimbabwe are engaged in a grinding struggle for survival and most household income is used for basic food items. The percentage of income devoted to food expenditures is often used as a basic poverty indicator. On average, households spend as much as a third of their income on food. Forty-two percent of households in the survey said they spend 40 percent or more of their income on food (Table 13.13). Twelve percent spend over 70 percent of their income on food and can be considered extremely poor. Clearly, without remittances the situation would be much worse.

Table 13.13: Food Poverty Index

% of Household Expenditure Devoted to Food (FPI)	No. of Households	% of Households	Cumulative %
10-19	63	12	12
20-29	121	21	33
30-39	144	25	58
40-49	86	15	73
50-59	58	10	83
60-69	29	5	88
70-79	35	5	93
80-89	23	4	97
90+	16	3	100

N = 575

The Lived Poverty Index (LPI) is another measure of the extent and distribution of household poverty.⁴ Respondents were asked how often they went without some of the basic necessities of life (including food to eat, clean water, medical attention, electricity, fuel and a cash income) in the previous year. The LPI scale runs from 0 (complete satisfaction of basic needs) to 4 (frequent shortages of basic needs). While 69 percent of households said they had never gone without enough food in the previous year, 29 percent had gone without several times, and 2 percent said they never had enough food to eat (Table 13.14). With regard to clean water and cooking fuel, again the majority (around three-quarters) had never gone without. Less than 1 percent of households were always without these commodities. Despite Zimbabwe's medical brain drain, 74 percent of respondents said their household had never gone without medical treatment or medicine. Only 55 percent had never gone without a cash income.

Table 13.14: Lived Poverty Index

		No.	%	Mean LPI
Not Had Enough Food	Never	500	69.2	0.17
	Just once or twice	151	20.9	0.77
	Several times	57	7.9	1.45
	Many times	13	1.8	1.91
	Always	2	0.3	2.30
N = 723				
Not Had Enough Clean Water for Home Use	Never	561	77.6	0.23
	Just once or twice	103	14.2	0.91
	Several times	34	4.7	1.27
	Many times	23	3.2	1.94
	Always	2	0.3	2.70
N = 723				
Gone Without Medicine or Medical Treatment	Never	529	73.9	0.19
	Just once or twice	131	18.3	0.85
	Several times	44	6.1	1.51
	Many times	9	1.3	2.47
	Always	2	0.3	2.40
N = 716				
Not Had Enough Fuel to Cook Food	Never	536	77.1	0.22
	Just once or twice	97	14.0	0.86
	Several times	43	6.2	1.44
	Many times	12	1.7	1.78
	Always	7	1.0	2.44
N = 695				
Gone Without A Cash Income	Never	395	54.8	0.09
	Just once or twice	187	25.9	0.59
	Several times	98	13.6	1.00
	Many times	29	4.0	1.68
	Always	12	1.7	1.90
N = 721				

Although most households were struggling and poverty was increasing, very few could be considered destitute, at least on the evidence of this survey. However, without the constant and regular infusion of remittances from outside the country, the situation would probably have been very different. This is confirmed by a comparison with a national sample of Zimbabwean households by the Afrobarometer project.⁵ The mean LPI score for the migrant-sending households was 0.44 compared with a national score of 1.74.⁶

CONCLUSION

Remittances have become an essential part of household budgets and the national economy of Zimbabwe. In recent years, remittance flows have increased due to the growing number of Zimbabwean migrants who transfer cash and goods through both formal (e.g. banks, dedicated money transfer agencies and the Post Office) and informal (e.g. carrying in person or sending with a friend, relative or co-worker) channels. These informal transfer systems include sending remittances through relatives, friends, trusted agents and personal transport of cash or goods. Other informal transport services operate as side businesses to an import-export operation, retail shop or currency dealership.

The MARS study shows that remittances are mostly used for basic consumption (e.g. for food, school fees, medical expenses and for building). A small number of households have been able to use their remittances to increase income through the purchase and sale of goods or by investment in transportation or farming. Remittances are certainly spent on luxury goods but only a small minority of households can afford to spend very much on these goods. Interestingly, households do try and save a portion of their remittances, although it is likely that any value that savings had in 2005 would have been wiped out by rampant inflation shortly thereafter.

The study clearly shows that without remittance flows, the situation of many Zimbabwean households would be even more dire than it is already. Remittances have reduced vulnerability to hunger, ill health and poverty in both rural and urban households. A comparison with randomly selected households showed that households with migrants go without basic necessities less often. Remittances also allowed families to keep children in school and to put roofs over the heads of household members. There is a double irony here. Without the economic crisis in Zimbabwe, migration would not have reached

the volume that it has. In turn, migration (through remittances) has staved off the worst aspects of that crisis for many households, and even kept the national economy afloat (if only barely). However, the depth of the crisis and the struggle for survival mean that remittances are rarely used in a systematic or sustained manner for what might broadly be called “developmental” purposes. That is not why migrants remit and those are not the uses to which remittances are put.

NOTES

- 1 Existing studies of remittance flows to Zimbabwe tend to focus on case-study evidence: see S. Bracking and L. Sachikonye, *Remittances, Poverty Reduction and the Informalisation of Household Wellbeing in Zimbabwe*, Global Poverty Research Group, Working Paper No. 45, 2006; F. Maphosa, “Remittances and Development: The Impact of Migration to South Africa on Rural Livelihoods in Southern Zimbabwe” *Development Southern Africa* 24(1) (2007): 123-36; F. Magunha, A. Bailey and L. Cliffe, “Remittance Strategies of Zimbabweans in Northern England” School of Geography, University of Leeds, Leeds, 2009.
- 2 For regional overviews see W. Pendleton, J. Crush, E. Campbell, T. Green, H. Simelane, D. Tevera and F. de Vletter, *Migration, Remittances and Development in Southern Africa* SAMP Migration Policy Series No. 44, Cape Town, 2006; B. Dodson, H. Simelane, D. Tevera, T. Green, A. Chikanda and F. de Vletter, *Gender, Migration and Remittances in Southern Africa* SAMP Migration Policy Series No. 49, Cape Town, 2008.
- 3 The weighted value is calculated by multiplying the number of cases “N” by the median household value. The median value is a more reliable measure since the mean is often distorted by a small number of large values.
- 4 The Lived Poverty Index (LPI) was developed by Afrobarometer and used in their country studies; R. Mattes, M. Bratton and Y. Davids, “Poverty, Survival and Democracy in Southern Africa” Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 23, Cape Town, 2003.
- 5 The Afrobarometer Network, “Afrobarometer Round 2: Compendium of Comparative Results from a 15-Country Survey” Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 34, Cape Town, 2004.
- 6 Mattes et al, “Poverty, Survival and Democracy in Southern Africa.”

A VERY BAD SITUATION

I arrived in South Africa in 1984 and worked as a domestic worker for twenty years. I left Zimbabwe when the situation was not that bad but as you know, now it is very bad. I didn't know how long I would work here. I just decided to work until I was tired. I came here secretly. Only my mother knew I was here. She did not want the neighbours to find out that her child was in Johannesburg. In 1996, the South African government gave those of us without proper papers a chance to fix our passports and to have rights.

Last year my employer died so now I'm here making a small business. Everything I've worked for is here in South Africa. We cook and sell food to the people. Here I can get bread and send money home. I have gone back to Zimbabwe so many times. Others come with clothes to sell and get money to feed their kids in Zimbabwe. We see many women here selling clothes. These women experience lots of heartache. They are at home poor, not having anything and the children are crying. They have to have a passport and visa to cross the border gate. It's also hard because they get abused on the way. They are raped and also when they arrive here, they don't live happy here. Some arrive in the morning and they are afraid to sleep here. They come in the morning with buses and they buy their clothes and go back home.

We would love the government to build the women a place to arrive at, to have a place where they are sheltered because in this country there are a lot of criminals. Also we would like to open businesses here. There are a lot

of white immigrants here but you never see them being chased around the streets by police. They are always treated with respect. But if it is a black lady or a black man they are always being chased away.



Chapter Fourteen

Remittances, Informalisation and Dispossession in Urban Zimbabwe

Sarah Bracking and Lloyd Sachikonye

During the multifaceted crisis that befell Zimbabwe after 2000, the plight of the people was manifest in a shrinking employment market, triple- or four-digit inflation, a dearth of available commodities, rising child mortality rates, falling life expectancy – to the worst female life expectancy in the world – and a governance crisis experienced as political violence, uncertainty and cultural and social isolationism. In this context, remittances have become centrally important to household well-being, reproduction and survival.¹

The Zimbabwean crisis is of such magnitude that many of the country's urban households are now unable to survive without the infusion of remittances from a globally-dispersed diaspora.² This chapter examines the role of remittances in basic survival and privatised social protection in the urban suburbs of Zimbabwe. It examines how individuals and households in urban Zimbabwe have responded to an extended period of economic crisis and retreat by the state into "spoils politics."³ Optimism surrounding the ability of individuals to build institutions in periods of crisis, to substitute for those formal sector ones which have been functionally lost, must be tempered by a realistic acknowledgement of the limitations desperate and poor people face during such periods. Instead, an understandable widespread social and cultural implosion occurs in the everyday life of people, which remittances, though acts of solidarity, can only temper, not solve.

In Zimbabwe, there is an expanding cross-border, non-pecuniary goods economy and a shrinking, largely unused formal sector. Remitters are increasingly unwilling to use commercial companies, banks or friends and relatives to transit remittances and thus there is a shrinking institutional base for the political economy of remittances. In other words, reliance on the personal physical carriage of money has grown as trust in other individuals and firms has shrunk during a period of deep and extended crisis. This serves to arrest any undue romanticism about the ability of an informal sector to emerge in direct compensation and competition to an ossified formal sector: all institutions are in crisis and the new informal remittance transfer systems are no exception.

METHODOLOGY

The data on which this chapter is based was collected in November – December 2005 and then again a year later in the suburbs of Harare and Bulawayo. Because of security concerns, the names and addresses of the original 300 households interviewed in 2005 were not retained. In 2006, a different 300 households in the same districts were interviewed. An exercise in currency renewal had just occurred, where three zeros were removed from the currency's face value, in a state suffering the excesses of propaganda and fear. Some of the data is corrupted by this numeric confusion and fear-induced unwillingness to respond to strangers' questions.

The purpose of the second survey was to review any changes in remittance sending and receipt statistics since 2005 and, in particular, whether there were indications of a higher state of crisis in the economy; increased informalisation of economic activity; the rate of dollarisation in the informal economy; and changes to households' living standards as these related to receipt of remittances. The survey also sought to review how the various sectors and institutions of the remittance economy – the informal sector money couriers, the Internet-based money exchangers, the informal commercial companies and cargo carriers – had grown or shrunk in relation to their formal sector comparators and to review the basic organisational contours of a parallel economy in the midst of a governance crisis.

Both surveys were conducted in one high-density and one low-density suburb in both Harare and Bulwayo. The suburbs concerned were Mabelreign (low-density) and Highfield (high-density) in Harare and Glencara (low-density) and Nkulumane (high-density)

in Bulawayo. In 2006, the low-density Bulawayo sample included 25 households from Khumalo, although this suburb did not feature in 2005. The 2006 survey also included 6 households from low-density Parklands (compared to 24 in 2005). In 2005, 26 households from Selbourne Park were from low-density Bulawayo, but none from this area were included in 2006. All other households were drawn from the same suburbs in both 2005 and 2006. The two samples are relatively comparable by a number of demographic indicators, including age and sex (Table 14.1). Only the Highfield sample showed a marked difference (49 percent and 63 percent female in 2005 and 2006 respectively). For most purposes of comparison, therefore, the two samples can be viewed as commensurate within measurable margins of error.

The comparability of the two surveys by income is more problematic. The index bands used in the 2005 survey were matched to values in 2006. Either this exercise inflated the value of the 2006 incomes, or the sample set had become wealthier (Figure 14.1). It might also be that remittance income had become regularised so that people included it in their estimates of household income, whereas in 2005 they did not. As noted above, the 2006 survey occurred shortly after the revaluation of the Zimbabwean dollar (ZWD). What had been ZWD 1 million became ZWD 1,000. This could have affected the calculation of incomes and other receipts, as households struggled to understand the value of the new money.

Table 14.1: Sex and Location of Respondents

		Harare		Bulawayo		Total
		Low-Density (Mabelreign)	High-Density (Highfield)	Low-Density (Glencara)	High-Density (Nkulumane)	
2005	Male (%)	39.2	50.7	47.3	45.0	45.7
	Female (%)	60.8	49.3	52.7	55.0	54.3
	N=	74	75	91	60	300
2006	Male (%)	41.3	37.3	47.7	45.9	43.0
	Female (%)	58.7	62.7	52.3	54.1	57.0
	N=	75	75	65	85	300

However, there still seems to have been a marked decline in 2006 in the proportion of very low Bulawayo incomes (Table 14.2). This may be related to an increase

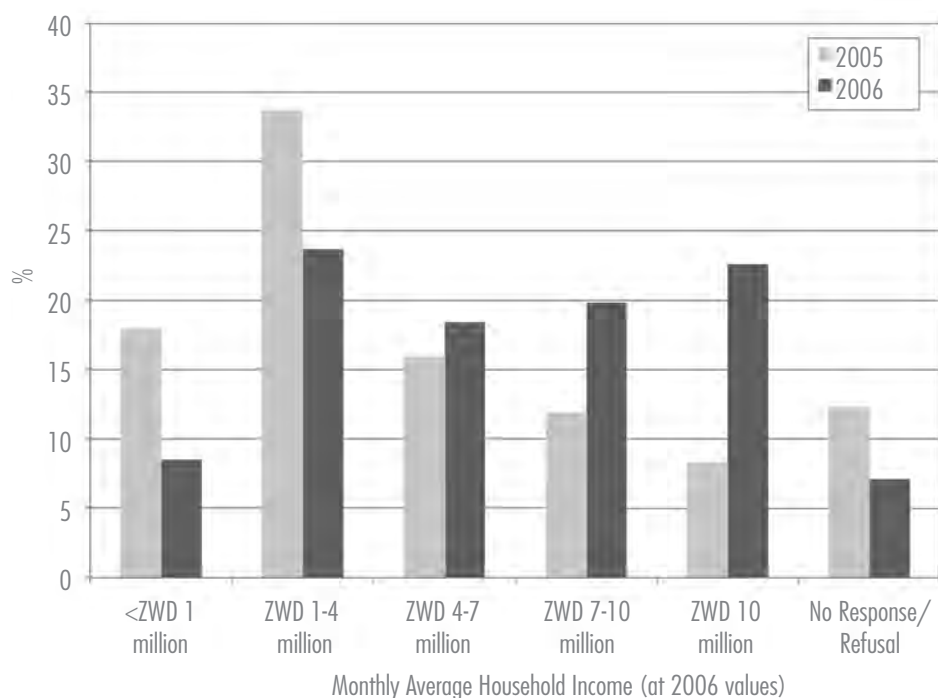


Figure 14.1: Monthly Average Household Income

Table 14.2: Monthly Average Household Income by Type of Suburb

	Low-Density Harare		High-Density Harare		Low-Density Bulawayo		High-Density Bulawayo	
	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006
<ZWD 1 million	24.4	58.3	57.8	37.5	2.2	0.0	15.6	4.2
ZWD 1-4 million	35.3	40.3	49.4	53.7	2.4	1.5	12.9	4.5
ZWD 4-7 million	47.5	30.8	12.5	34.6	22.5	11.5	17.5	23.1
ZWD 7-10 million	20.0	17.9	0.0	16.1	63.3	30.4	16.7	35.7
>ZWD 10 million	23.8	9.4	0.0	4.7	71.4	60.9	4.8	25.0
No Response/Refusal	9.7	5.0	6.5	0.0	41.9	75.0	41.9	20.0
Total	29.4	26.1	29.8	26.5	23.4	27.6	17.5	19.8

in remittances received in 2006 in high-density Bulawayo. It may also be related to a build up of household assets from an earlier period of remittances, which is difficult to explore statistically when the households are not identical, the time period elapsed is only one year and the sample is relatively small. There are also fewer high-density area households included in the 2006 data for Bulawayo than in 2005 partly due to the inclusion of Khumalo households in the 2006 set, thus skewing the whole data set's incomes upward.

REMITTING PATTERNS AND PRACTICES

A significant proportion of urban households in Bulawayo and Harare receive remittances (around half in both 2005 and 2006) (Table 14.3). In 2006, 90 percent of households with a relative away were receiving goods or money. While there was only a one-percent increase overall in the proportion of households receiving remittances between 2005 and 2006, there were larger changes between the cities and in particular suburbs (Table 14.4).

Table 14.3: Receiving Households, 2005 and 2006

	2005	2006	Total
Yes (%)	49.7	50.7	50.2
No (%)	49.7	49.3	49.5
Don't Know (%)	0.7	0.0	0.3
Total	100	100	100
N=	300	300	600

In late 2005, the proportion of households receiving remittances varied from a low of 27.5 percent in low-density Bulawayo to a high of 78.4 percent in low-density Harare. The figures for high-density areas were more similar in both cities (43 percent and 53 percent). By late 2006, there seems to have been a significant drop in recipients in the low-density suburbs of Harare (from 78 percent in 2005 to 43 percent in 2006). This could be because a group of migrants had stopped sending remittances which might

illustrate the “remittances decay hypothesis” that remittances decline as time spent away lengthens.⁴

Table 14.4: Households Receiving Goods and/or Money by Suburb, 2005 and 2006

		Low-Density Harare	High-Density Harare	Low-Density Bulawayo	High-Density Bulawayo	Total
2005	Yes (%)	78.4	53.3	27.5	43.3	49.7
	No (%)	21.6	46.7	70.3	56.7	49.7
	Don't Know (%)	0.0	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.7
	Total	100	100	100	100	100
	N=	74	75	91	60	300
2006	Yes (%)	42.7	45.3	58.5	56.5	50.7
	No (%)	57.3	54.7	41.5	43.5	49.3
	Total	100	100	100	100	100
	N=	75	75	65	85	300

Another reason for the declining number of remitters to low-density Harare suburbs could be the continued emigration of family members, as spouses and children join the migrant in their new country of domicile. Taking the sub-sample of low-density Harare residents, the drop off in remittance-receiving households is large against a fairly constant distribution of household income shares between the income brackets. The number of close relatives transferring money seems to have shrunk, supporting the hypothesis that families may have reunited. For example, 21 sons and daughters were primary senders in 2005, compared with only six in 2006 (Figure 14.2). Again, while 10 mothers or fathers were sole senders in 2005, there was only one in 2006.

However, there may be a bleaker picture of reduced levels of transfer between relatives that have not reunited. For example, cousins, aunts and uncles disappeared as remitters, while six brothers or sisters in 2005 were reduced to one in 2006. It is theoretically possible that the drop in the number of sole senders was offset by households receiving money from more than one person. However, this too had dropped: in Harare's low-density suburbs in 2005, 29 households claimed to be receiving money from more than one person; in 2006 this dropped to only 11 households.

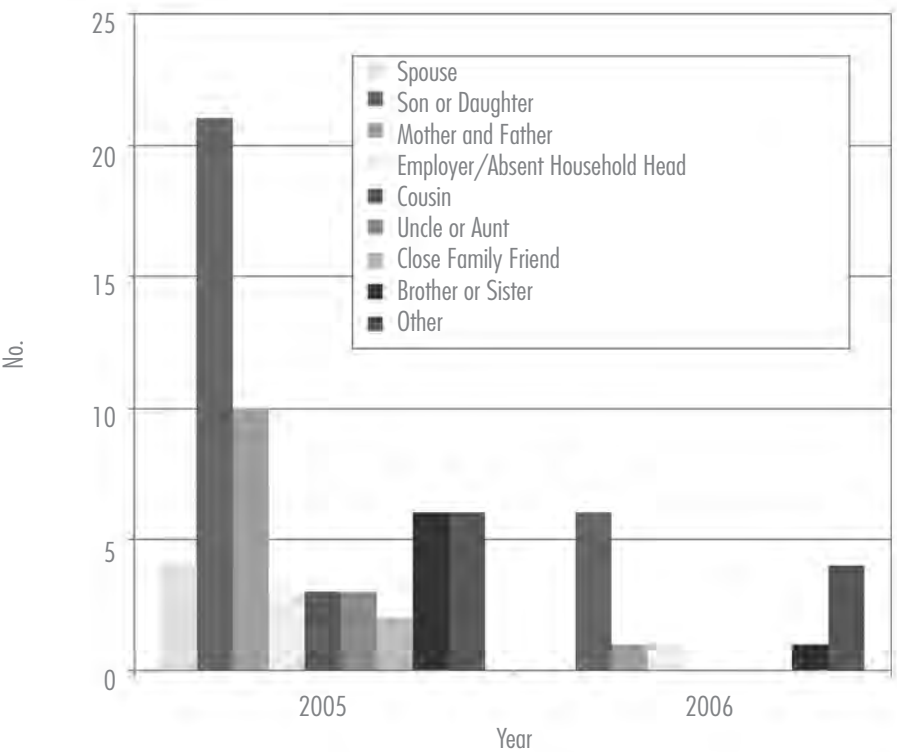


Figure 14.2: Relationship of Remitters to Recipients in Low-Density Harare

Table 14.5: Relationship of Primary Remitter to Household

	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	Total (%)
Spouse	12.1	0.0	8.0
Son/Daughter	26.2	41.6	31.4
Mother/Father	12.1	5.2	9.7
Employer/Absent household head	4.7	1.3	3.5
Cousin	5.4	0.0	3.5
Uncle/Aunt	4.7	1.3	3.5
Adoptive parent	0.7	0.0	0.4
Close family friend	4.0	0.0	2.7
Brother/Sister	15.4	2.6	11.1
Other	14.8	48.1	26.1
Total	100	100	100
N=	149	77	226

In the households reporting a single primary sender in 2005, 18 remitters (12 percent) were spouses, 10 to Highfield alone (Table 14.5). By 2006 this figure had dropped to zero. Sons and daughters were much more constant, at 39 in 2005 and 32 in 2006, although within locations this varied more, as the data for low-density Harare demonstrates.

The data show a significant rise in the proportion of households receiving remittances from multiple senders between 2005 and 2006 (from 15 percent to 48 percent). In 2005 there were two siblings mentioned in the multiple senders category. Together with those siblings who were sole senders, this makes a total of 25 migrants. In 2006, only two siblings were named as sole senders, but fully 31 siblings were mentioned by households receiving from more than one sender, making a total of 33 sibling senders, more than in 2005. In all the other three categories – parents, siblings and children – the total number of senders (those mentioned as primary senders and as senders within multiple answers) had dropped (Table 14.6).

Table 14.6: Relationship to Sender

		Parent	Sibling	Spouse	Child
2005	Named as primary sender	18	23	18	39
	Mentioned by a household with multiple senders	2	2	4	6
	Total	20	25	22	45
2006	Named as primary sender	4	2	0	32
	Mentioned by a household with multiple senders	7	31	9	6
	Total	11	33	9	38

The drop in the number of households with a single sender in the close relatives categories is not offset by an increase in the multiple senders category (which would include these people.) In other words, close relatives sending money were fewer overall, even though households had managed to diversify their sources of revenue from those away. This is probably a case of gaining smaller rewards from a greater number of people, in the absence of a primary sender, again suggesting that nuclear family structures may have rejoined elsewhere. Overall, alongside the data suggesting that the regularity of remittances declined and that monthly receipts were fewer (see below), this demographic assessment would strongly suggest that remittances themselves declined in 2006, perhaps because of the tougher times faced by the remitters themselves.

In both 2005 and 2006, there was a fairly standardised and widespread pattern of monthly remittances. Certainly, there was a large drop (from 75 percent to 26 percent) in the proportion of households who had received remittances in the previous month, although this may have been associated with the financial turmoil in late 2006. In 2005, over 90 percent of households had received a remittance in the previous year compared to only 62 percent of households in 2006 (Table 14.7). Overall, however, there was a heightened degree of regularisation of cash remittances, the proportion of households receiving cash remittances at least once a month growing from 74 percent to 79 percent (Table 14.8). The sending of goods also appears to become more consistent. There was an increase in the number of households reporting that the receipt of goods was a regular event (from 38 percent to 52 percent) and an associated decline in those that said it was a "one-off" event (from 59 percent to 47 percent).

Table 14.7: Timing of Most Recent Receipt

	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	Total
Last Week	8.9	7.4	8.2
Last Month	66.4	18.2	42.2
Last Year	15.1	37.2	26.2
Last 5 Years	3.4	20.3	11.9
Over 5 Years	6.2	16.9	11.6
Total	100	100	100
N=	146	148	294

Table 14.8: Regularity of Receipt of Money

	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	Total (%)
Every Week	0.0	2.4	1.2
Every Month	73.7	76.6	75.2
Every Year	13.6	10.5	12.0
Less than Once per Year	0.0	0.8	0.4
Other	12.7	9.7	11.2
Total	100	100	100
N=	118	124	242

Between 2005 and 2006, the number of primary senders located in South Africa rose from 23 percent to 28 percent, but dropped in the UK from 25 percent to 18.5 percent. This could be because migration to South Africa continued to increase while that to the UK stabilized. For low-density Harare, the actual number of senders in the UK dropped from 23 to 10 between 2005 and 2006. It was constant for South Africa (8 and 7 respectively). For high-density Harare, the number of senders in South Africa dropped from 17 to 13, but in the UK it rose from 6 to 9. In low-density Bulawayo, the number of senders in South Africa, UK and America had also risen. The most significant change between the two years was in the location of senders for high-density Bulawayo, where the number in South Africa had risen from 4 to 14.

Table 14.9: Main Remittance Channel for Goods

	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	Total (%)
Brought by the migrant relative on a visit home	38.2	50.0	44.3
Brought by another person known to the household	34.5	15.8	24.8
Sent by an informal courier not known to the household	3.6	6.7	5.2
Sent in the post	7.3	10.8	9.1
Someone went to fetch it from where the relative works	6.4	7.5	7.0
Someone met the person sending it	2.7	0.8	1.7
Employed commercial cargo company	6.4	0.8	3.5
Other	0.9	7.5	4.3
Total	100	100	100
N=	110	120	230

Remittance channels underwent some significant changes between 2005 and 2006. In particular, the direct transit of goods with the sender themselves on a visit home rose from 38 percent to 50 percent, while the use of persons known to the household dropped from 34 percent to only 16 percent (Table 14.9). This suggests that migrants were increasingly choosing the means of transit that gave them most control and security against theft or misadventure. This hypothesis is also supported by a slight increase in

people going to fetch the goods.⁵ The dominant explanation for the choice of mode of transit also shifted (Table 14.10). "Convenience" polled 50 percent in 2005 but dropped to 32 percent in 2006. On the other hand, safety and security concerns increased from 10 percent in 2005 to almost a third in 2006.

Table 14.10: Explanation for Choice of Mode of Transit of Goods

	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	Total
Cheapest	4.0	7.4	5.5
Safest/Most secure	9.9	32.1	19.8
Most convenient	50.5	32.1	42.3
Fastest	6.9	8.6	7.7
Other	28.7	19.8	24.7
Total	100	100	100
N=	101	81	182

Table 14.11: Channels for Cash Remittances

	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	Total (%)
In person	23.5	43.4	33.3
Relative/Family friend	31.8	19.4	25.7
Courier	3.0	5.4	4.2
To bank account	18.9	6.2	12.6
Money transfer company	0.8	0.8	0.8
Agent into my bank account	9.8	13.2	11.5
Agent - had to collect it	3.0	4.7	3.8
Agent to the house	3.8	0.8	2.3
Other	5.3	6.2	5.7
Total	100	100	100
N=	132	129	261

Between 2005 and 2006, there was also a dramatic increase in personal conveyance of cash remittances (from 23 percent to 43 percent) and a corresponding fall in

those using relatives or friends (from 32 percent to 19 percent), suggesting that the trust in such relationships was wearing thin (Table 14.11). The number of senders using the formal banking system also fell dramatically (from 19 percent to 6 percent). In other words, informal networks, informal commercial companies and formal sector institutions were being used less in 2006 than in 2005. Western Union was used by 14 people in 2005, and only one in 2006, who was in any case referring to a dated receipt, since Western Union was included in a government ban on formal sector Money Transfer Agencies (MTAs) during the survey period.

The decline in the use of formal sector banks corresponds to some degree to an increase in reliance on informal mechanisms of currency exchange. Over 50 percent of remittance-receiving households in 2006 used money changers (up from 40 percent in 2005.) Use of banks for currency exchange dropped from 9 percent to 6 percent (Table 14.12). These changes signify the ever-greater and unrealistic gap between official and parallel rates during the survey period and suggest a consolidation of the parallel market. The use of casually-met money changers dropped from 11 percent to 3 percent – reflecting criminalisation of the transaction, alongside a heightened state security presence surrounding the changing of currency in late 2006.

Table 14.12: Money Changing Methods

	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	Total (%)
Commercial bank	9.4	5.7	7.1
Money changing shop	1.9	1.1	1.4
Known money changer	15.1	40.2	30.7
Recommended money changer	13.2	8.0	10.0
Casually met money changer	11.3	3.4	6.4
Other*	49.1	41.4	44.3
Total	100	100	100
N=	53	87	140

* Most specified "received in ZWD."

Most of those who used informal money changers cited the low official rate compared to the competitive parallel market rate. They had memories of the time when the

Government of Zimbabwe closed the Bureau de Change and the Western Union offices and an earlier period during which Western Union was only allowed to pay out in local currency. More than a quarter reported that they had changed their transit mode, suggesting that in a market which relies on trust, people are quite ready, or are forced, to change their behaviour relatively frequently.

Predominantly, however, money was received in person rather than remotely. In 2006, 23 percent of transactions were carried out remotely, compared to 30 percent in 2005. In 2006, a full 75 percent received their money "in person," compared to 67 percent in 2005. Moreover, more personal exchanges were transacted in foreign currency in 2006 than in 2005, with 48 percent and 30 percent received in Forex for the two years respectively. This suggests that families were increasingly unwilling to use remote, unknown, or institutional channels of conduit. They were also becoming more averse to exchanging the money into local currency at some point along its transit – whether from a domiciled bank in the UK (forex), a local business distributor, or a street-level money changer on the way from the airport to home. Instead, they were increasingly taking the foreign exchange door-to-door. Correspondingly, the number of in-person transactions carried out in ZWD dropped from 65 percent in 2005 to 50 percent in 2006, indicating some dollarisation in the economy. This dollarisation of the parallel remittance economy was predictable given the hyper-inflation rates pertaining at the time and the actual physical shortage of bank notes. The increase in personal transactions is probably also related to the proximity factor (to and from South Africa), and the growing number of remitters there. Communication between remitters and home is easier (it is a day's journey) and more regular, while the need for institutions and "middlemen" is reduced commensurately.

In 2006, an increased number of households (20 percent versus 6 percent in 2005) paid the money they received into a bank account. Although this might be because more money was received in person, it may also indicate surveillance in the banking sector and the partial criminalisation of remittances. This would undermine the safety of a cross-border deposit, even when the receiver had an actual preference for the money to be in a bank. That is, it would need to be brought into the country clandestinely as foreign exchange, changed into local currency, and then deposited. Of those receiving foreign currency, by far the most preferred method of exchange into ZWD was to use a money changer known to the household.

Accompanying the shift to increased personal transmission of remittances was greater regularity of home visits. There was an increase in those migrants who returned home every week (from 1 percent to 5 percent) and every month (from 19 percent to 23 percent) (Table 14.13). The proportion of migrants returning only once a year decreased from 27 percent to 19 percent but there was a compensating increase in those returning at Christmas (from 9 percent to 14 percent). While 21 percent had not returned for a year, the figure dropped to 10 percent in 2006 (suggesting that some long-term absentees had returned during the year).

Table 14.13: Frequency of Return Visits

	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	Total (%)
Every week	0.7	5.3	3.0
Every month	18.9	23.3	21.1
Every year	27.0	19.3	23.2
Every Christmas	8.8	14.0	11.4
School holidays	0.0	1.3	0.7
Less than once a year	14.2	12.7	13.4
Never	20.9	10.0	15.4
Don't know	1.4	0.0	0.7
Other	8.1	14.0	11.1
Total	100	100	100

The number of people supported by remittances was large and roughly similar in both years (Table 14.14). The number of households receiving financial assistance from other sources was also constant, although there was a slight rise in households receiving assistance from the World Food Programme and government of Zimbabwe, reflecting deepening poverty, and increased food assistance to urban areas by donors and public authorities.

Around 90 percent of the total sample spent remittances in multiple ways, although the expenditure patterns did shift between 2005 and 2006. Some 57 percent of households had spent remittances on food in 2006, up from 50 percent in 2005, with a constant 95 percent agreeing that they "could now not be hungry" in both years. The increased proportion of households buying food could be due to higher local food costs.

Table 14.14: Number of People Supported by Remittances

	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	Total (%)
None	4.5	0.0	2.3
Just myself	7.6	10.2	8.8
Myself and one other	22.0	23.4	22.7
Fewer than 5 people	45.5	50.0	47.7
5 to 10 people	16.7	14.8	15.8
11 to 20 people	0.8	1.6	1.2
Other	3.0	0.0	1.5
Total	100	100	100
N=	132	128	260

In both years, the households reported that goods received were of critical importance to them. However, the proportion of people answering that the goods were “indispensable” rose from 68 percent to 90 percent. Asked whether another item would have been more useful than the one sent, 85 percent answered “no” in 2006, compared to 80 percent in 2005, suggesting a slightly higher degree of matching between goods sent and household need. Similarly, in 2006, a full 95 percent answered that nothing else would have been more desirable than the goods sent, rising from 89 percent in 2005.

INFORMALITY AND GOVERNANCE

Poverty reduction, in its various dimensions, is evident from the migrant remittance data gathered from the survey. However, this must be considered in relation to effects, such as inflation, that occur as a consequence, at least in part, of the informalisation and “dollarisation” of the economy. These in turn are exacerbated by remittances. Not only are Zimbabwean dollar receipts subject to constant devaluation, remittance receivers have experienced expulsion and government extortion. In this sense, the quantitative data from this research confirms the interpretative findings of qualitative studies on

coping mechanisms and “getting by” in deleterious governance circumstances. Ameliorative networks and social capital are formed, but not without struggle and reaction from the state.⁶ Thus, avoiding pressure from the government to surrender remittance receipts into the formal system – and subsequently losing 90 percent of their potential value at the official exchange rate – does not mean that the market value of remittances stays constant at the parallel rate. They are also subject to hyperinflation.

A high degree of economic informality was observed in the 2006 survey, when compared to both the 2005 survey and to other studies. General estimates of unofficial transfers of remittances to the developing world vary between 35 percent and 250 percent of total remittances.⁷ Another study uses historical data on the balance of payments, figures on migration, transaction costs and country characteristics for over 100 countries, supplemented with household survey data, to conclude that informal remittances amount to about 35-75 percent of official remittances to developing countries.⁸ The data from this study suggests that informal remittances range between 90 and 95 percent for Zimbabwe.

There is a consensus that informal remittances to Sub-Saharan Africa, encouraged by dual exchange rates, are relatively high.⁹ Some micro-level field studies have also indicated that informal or in-kind transfers are substantial globally, including in the DRC, Somalia and Zimbabwe.¹⁰ Widening disparities between official and unofficial exchange rates in some Sub-Saharan African countries, the maturing of international migrant populations and the increase in electronic transfers could all augment these estimates.

The concepts of “informal” and “formal” are not easy to fix, however, while the informal sector is also ambiguous in its actual economic effects. The data from Zimbabwe suggests that within the “informal” category, there is a greater reliance on known persons and relatives than on commercial companies, either for the whole or part of the journey to collect or deliver goods and/or money. “Informalisation” can thus take distinct forms which, in turn, relate to the social positioning of recipients, and feed into political economies of corruption, collapse, rentierism and externalisation of funds in failing states. Thus, understanding the role of remittances in illiberal states like Zimbabwe requires reference to wider cultural norms and embedded institutional practices within traditional or indigenous sites of reciprocal exchange.¹¹

Political economy accounts of the roots of nefarious government (the most proximate cause of informalisation) have been attributed to structural adjustment processes which legitimised the accumulation of private wealth while creating new opportunities for spoils politics through privatisation.¹² Rapid and unstable socioeconomic liberalisation has spurred "boundary politics" exercised "between the national and the global economy; between the public functionary and the citizen," where contests over resources have become illiberal and subject to corruption and violence.¹³ In this context, and where states have collapsed spurring humanitarian crises, remittances are particularly critical as a form of social protection of last resort.¹⁴

Neo-patrimonialism does appear to set a precedent for ruling elites to view remittances as somehow deserving or belonging to them, the natural patriotic leaders of the nation, such that punitive taxation regimes and spurious taxes are often devised to capture some of the income sent by migrants.¹⁵ The Zimbabwean government's "Home Link" scheme failed because the indirect tax built into the scheme was punitive in relation to the value of the money. There is also anecdotal evidence that senior politicians are best placed to take advantage of the disparity between the formal and informal exchange rates, making huge profits on changing remittance receivers' money. These politicians, and to a certain extent senders who can collect a rent by using the parallel market, form an odd coalition with reasons to support the patrimonial status quo.

Within a more extreme "spoils politics" model, the capture of private remittances by the political class would be commensurate with the functionality and form of other political relationships with the majority poor. In other words, it would seem like "common sense" that the Reserve Bank should capture them, even at a derisory official exchange rate. This research has provided evidence for the viability of this spoils politics model in the current context, to explain the mode of governmentality prevailing in Zimbabwe, and the role of remittances in contributing to the funding of that state form. This context undermines the pecuniary value of remittances over time, by reproducing chronic scarcity in goods markets, and by failing the citizens in terms of the welfare prerogatives of liberal government to the poor, whatever the short-term benefits to a minority of participants.

Indeed, there is also a multidimensional political economy relationship between the micro-level remittance economy and acts of kleptocracy by the ruling elite, because of the sheer magnitude of the former, and the lucrative rents and profits to be found in

money changing and money supply in transactional exchange between the informal and formal economy. Events in late 2007, surrounding a more recent replacement of the money stock, revealed “cash barons” at the heart of government, while some banks which facilitate parallel market exchange were rumoured to be owned by top officials within the ruling party.

These relationships between various social actors have the potential to be successfully understood within a “political economy of dispossession” paradigm. The political economy of decline in Zimbabwe has a specific trajectory but there are similarities with other states around the role of internally and internationally displaced people and the remittance economy they create.¹⁶ The dispossession of the rural and urban poor and informal sector traders during the “land reform” process and Operation Murambatsvina, has been accompanied by a dispossession of the middle and professional classes caused by economic contraction in the formal economy. This creates a situation where the dispossession of the majority has created economic opportunities for others, the core elite and the party faithful.¹⁷

CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored a small snapshot of change between November 2005 and November 2006 in the remittance economy of urban Zimbabwe and observed a general decline in the trust required to facilitate remote economic exchange. There was no observable build-up of the commercial informal sector during the year but rather an increase in, and further deepening of, the privatisation of economic exchange. It is probable that while both commercial informal sector institutions and familial networks can work relatively autonomously from the state, it is the capture of the former by members of the political class which has led to increased recourse to more private family networks. There was also some evidence of “dollarisation,” which again suggests a greater schism between state and society, even between 2005 and 2006. It is clear from the complementary qualitative data collected along with the surveys that informalization in 2006 continued to be affected by the Operation Murambatsvina of 2005.

Between 2005 and 2006, there was a decline in remittance receipts in the low-density suburbs of Harare, an increase in receipts in the high-density suburbs of Bulawayo and an increase in remitters in South Africa relative to the UK. The emotional and social

effects of loneliness and isolation caused by relatives' absences were still being felt acutely. In general, the extent to which the Zimbabwean economy as a whole is dependent on corporeal, physical and/or material dispossession – and the resulting assets made available and remittances sent – can be characterised as a political economy of dispossession. The economic effects of the remittance economy, alongside its political consequences, need to be further theorized and analysed. This is necessary in order to ensure that individual migrant sacrifices result in the greatest possible benefit to those left behind, and ultimately to members of the diaspora as well.

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NOTES

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EVERYONE BECOMES A RELATIVE

I provide accommodation services for people from Zimbabwe here in Cape Town. At any one time I may have up to 10 people here and another 15 or so at the flat that I rent to accommodate more people. What happens is that when they arrive most of them ask people about places that they can stay. So people tell them that they can be accommodated by Gogo. I end up having a lot of people who need my help. Some even hear about me in Zimbabwe from people who have stayed here before and they get addresses and phone numbers. So I always get calls from people that I do not know saying "Gogo, I need a place to stay, I have just arrived from home."

A lot of people do not come with anything. They are broke and have no jobs. So I allow them to stay so that they can find a job and then pay me when they are able to. I take the view that maybe it's God who has directed this person here to be helped, so I help. Others will not even have food so I give them my food. It's about helping people. When you are this far from home everyone becomes a relative, that's how I take it. It's just that some people cannot be helped. But I am happy that at least I play my part and it also sustains me by getting an income.

I tell them that I will give them accommodation for one to two months while they look for a job. After a month or two, some of them may find it difficult to get a job and they decide to go and live in the townships. Most of them just go without paying. There is nothing that I can do about that because they will not be working and will therefore not be able to afford to pay me. There are others who just disappear the moment they find employment. They just get their bags and disappear. It is not good. So it pains me,

but I cannot take it out on others. There are a lot of others who come with genuine problems so I help them. It's just that those that go without saying so make it difficult for me to continue helping others.

I do not even follow those that run away without paying, I do not. Some return when they are in problems and ask me to help them again. They give all sorts of explanations. There are those who apologize and ask for forgiveness and I forgive. Sometimes I feel like I should not take them back, but there are some who even go the extent of crying, showing that they are in real problems, so I take them back. However, I ask them to pay for their accommodation in advance as a condition for staying. Honestly I cannot say how many people I have helped so far. They are a lot.



Chapter Fifteen

Transnationalism and Undocumented Migration Between Rural Zimbabwe and South Africa

France Maphosa

A prominent feature of current international migration trends is that migrants do not cut ties with their countries of origin but maintain close contact with both the host and the home country. The term “transnationalism” is commonly used to describe these connections while the people involved in this type of migration are referred to as “transmigrants” or collectively, “transnational communities.”¹ Transnational communities maintain, build and reinforce multiple linkages between home and host countries.² Transmigrants live their lives across international borders.³ Transnationalism involves multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation states.⁴ Members of transnational communities move easily between different cultures, frequently maintain homes in two countries and pursue economic, political and cultural interests that require a simultaneous presence in both.

The concept of transnationalism is also applicable to migration to post-apartheid South Africa.⁵ However, the relationship between transnationalism and the undocumented status of many migrants has not been explored. This chapter discusses the experience of transmigrants from a high migrant-sending area in rural Zimbabwe. The type of migration taking place from this area is largely circulatory and most of it is undocumented.

Despite an intensified crackdown on undocumented migrants in the two countries, the rate of migration has been increasing over the last few years. This trend is attributable to the worsening economic situation in Zimbabwe characterised by, among other things, rising unemployment and the continued decline of the Zimbabwean dollar against currencies such as the South African rand and the Botswana pula.

While these Zimbabwean migrants spend most of their time in neighbouring countries, their ability to fully integrate into the host society is severely constrained. This is not an unusual situation for undocumented migrants anywhere. Their irregular status means that they are unable to participate openly and fully in the social and economic life of the host country. Many undocumented migrants in South Africa stay out of the formal employment sector. However, the typical Zimbabwean migrant in this study is an employee and not a business person. Migrants do engage in these activities, including fruit and vegetable vending and the sale of various small items, as a way of earning a living while they are looking for jobs. These income-generating activities are micro-scale, unregistered and temporary. Registering a business might require the applicant to provide information such as place of residence, nature and place of employment as well as identification particulars, information which the migrants might either not have or are afraid might give away their identities.

A recent study of Cameroonian migrants in Johannesburg has shown how they try to become less visible to the authorities by blending in and adopting local cultural practices.⁶ The degree to which they are able to integrate into local communities is, however, severely constrained by extreme xenophobia, discrimination and exploitation. Transmigration is a survival strategy to survive in an environment characterized by alienation and marginalization. Undocumented Zimbabwean migrants face similar contradictory pressures. While they adopt South African cultural practices to reduce their visibility, they are still made acutely aware of their “foreignness” by hostile South Africans and their impermanence because of the ever-present threat of being arrested and deported back to Zimbabwe.

On the other hand, the migrants do maintain very strong ties with their families and communities and not simply because integration into host communities is so difficult. Most maintain close links with home through the use of modern communication technologies, remittances and investing in their home country. In other words, these migrants retain extremely strong contact with Zimbabwe but their social and economic and

cultural integration into host communities is severely constrained by their irregular status and by the xenophobic attitudes of local citizens.

MIGRATING FROM WARD SEVEN

The field work for this chapter was carried out in Ward Seven of Mangwe District in the Matabeleland South Province of Zimbabwe. The Ward is located about 100 kilometres south of Plumtree, the administrative town for Mangwe District, and about 200 kilometres from Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city. It is in an agro-ecological region characterised by low rainfall patterns, poor soils and persistent droughts.⁷ Owing to the harsh economic conditions, harvests are generally very low and income from crops is insignificant. Crops are grown mainly for domestic consumption. Cattle stocks have been drastically reduced by recurrent drought. Wage employment is low, with most people who work employed as migrant workers outside the district, within or outside the country. Most of the people in wage employment are employed in South Africa and Botswana. The Ward was purposefully selected because of its geographical proximity to South Africa and a long history of labour migration to that country.

A variety of research tools were used, including a questionnaire administered to a sample of 150 households. Of the 150 households in the sample, 103 (69 percent) had at least one member who had migrated to South Africa. An earlier study in 1999 found that 62 percent of the working population in the same community were working either in South Africa or Botswana.⁸ Group discussions and individual unstructured interviews were also conducted with community leaders. Focus group discussions were held with school leavers, school-going youths and current and returned migrants.

With limited employment opportunities and lack of income from agriculture, migration to seek employment seems to be the only available option for most of the people in this part of Zimbabwe. Agricultural production, especially crop production, is not an economically viable option. Cattle, which used to be the mainstay of the local economy, have been decimated by drought and are no longer a sustainable option for increasing household income. The main reasons given for migrating to South Africa were economic: more than half (52 percent) cited unemployment as the primary reason. Other factors such as peer pressure (12 percent), better pay (12 percent) and prestige (11 percent) also play a role in the decision to migrate. To many Zimbabweans in this part of

the country, migrating to South Africa is seen as a “rite of passage,” a signal of a man’s maturity. Among the youth, particularly male youths, those who have not been to South Africa are often despised because they are perceived as *ibhare* (or unsophisticated).

TRANSNATIONAL REMITTING

Zimbabwean migrants maintain links with home through investment or entrepreneurship activities, occasional return trips at such times as Christmas or Easter holidays and through sending cash and in-kind remittances. Of the 103 households surveyed in Ward Seven with at least one member working in South Africa, only 22 percent did not receive remittances. This did not mean that the household had lost touch with the migrant; the main reason given for non-remitting was unemployment of the migrant.

There is a strong expectation that remittances will be sent home, and there are social sanctions that stigmatize those that fail to do so. A migrant who does not send remittances is referred to as *umadliwa*, deriving from the noun *ukudliwa*, meaning to be eaten up or devoured. The connotation is of a person who has been devoured by the pleasures of South Africa, especially one who spends all his money on women and beer, forgetting relatives left behind. Alternatively, such a migrant is referred to as *umgewu*, although this carries the same connotations as *ukudliwa* and *ukugewuka*, from which the noun *umgewu* is derived.

Remittances are an important source of income for households in Ward Seven. They are used mainly to provide for households’ basic needs, including food, clothing, shelter, education and health care. School fees and health care were mentioned by the majority of the households (79 percent and 65 percent respectively) as uses of cash remittances. Building houses and purchasing consumer goods were mentioned by 53 percent of the households. Some migrants have built attractive homes, installed solar power and drilled boreholes.

Recipients also use part of their remittances for paying debts and contributing to burial societies, funeral expenses and wages for workers. Migrants with aged parents and those with children back home usually hire domestic workers to take care of their parents and children. In the case of households where all or most of the adult male members are migrants, labour is often hired as herd boys and to assist in agricultural activities.

A significant number of remittance-receiving households (59 percent) in Ward Seven invest in livestock. Cattle are reared mainly as a source of income, although they also provide milk and are occasionally slaughtered for meat. Investing in cattle is not a sustainable option, however, because of recurrent drought, coupled with growing human and livestock populations. As more migrants invest in cattle, great pressure is placed on grazing land and pastures which are affected by the droughts.

Remittances are also invested in buying other livestock such as donkeys, goats, sheep and chickens. Donkeys and goats are more drought-tolerant than cattle and therefore can survive in harsh climatic conditions. Donkeys provide draught power, while goats and other smaller livestock such as sheep and chickens are kept for meat but occasionally sold to raise income, particularly for emergencies such as medical and funeral expenses. Unlike the decision to sell cattle, which is often that of the head of the household (usually a male migrant), the decision to sell smaller livestock may be taken by other members of the household (usually wives or children of migrants) as need arises. This also applies to the decision to slaughter smaller livestock for meat.

Investment in agricultural production other than livestock rearing was mentioned by 31 percent of remittance-receiving households. Cattle and donkeys are an investment in crop production as they provide draught power. Remittances are also used to purchase seed, fertiliser and agricultural implements such as ploughs and hoes. Investing in crop production is not a sustainable option because crops often fail. Some of the remittance money is invested in buying scotch-carts which are a major means of transport in many rural areas. Scotch-carts (usually drawn by donkeys) are a versatile form of transport. They are used for daily needs such as fetching water and collecting firewood and also as ambulances and hearses.

Cash is sent in either South African Rand or Zimbabwean Dollars. Sending money in foreign currency depends on two considerations. One is the recipient's literacy level, especially numerical literacy: the recipient must be able to understand the transactions that take place on the black market, where the probability of being swindled is high if one does not appreciate the mathematics involved. The other consideration is the urgency with which the money is needed. When there is a pressing need, such as outstanding school fees or medical expenses, it becomes convenient for the remitter to change the money into Zimbabwean dollars before it reaches the recipient. Otherwise, money can be sent in foreign currency so that the recipient can look for the most

favourable rate on the parallel market. Trust is very important in these transactions because, as an illegal activity, dealing in foreign currency is risky.

Non-cash remittances include foodstuffs such as maize meal, sugar, salt and cooking oil, and consumer goods such as bicycles, radios, sofas, agricultural inputs and building material. Most non-cash remittances respond to the specific and immediate needs of their recipients. Almost all the remittance-receiving households mentioned food as one kind of remittance. This indicates the precarious food security situation in the area where most household income is spent on food because harvests are very low and barely last to the next harvest season. Consumer goods such as radios, TVs, VCRs and furniture are usually purchased in South Africa and sent home. Bicycles, an important means of transport, are also often imported from South Africa.

Most remittances are sent through informal channels including cross-border transport operators, personal delivery by the remitter or collection by the beneficiary. The preferred method of channelling both cash and goods is via cross-border transport operators. One of the reasons for using this channel to send remittances is that there are no banking facilities in the area. Banks are found in Plumtree, 100 kilometres away. A postal agency that used to offer banking facilities closed a year before the study, citing prohibitively high rentals for the premises from which it was operating. Using banks or the postal service to send remittances would be both costly and inconvenient, as recipients would have to travel to Plumtree to collect them. The cost includes transport, food and overnight accommodation in Plumtree, which is often necessary because of transport problems. At the time of the research, no buses going directly to Plumtree passed through Ward Seven. Residents wanting to go to Plumtree had to go via Bulawayo, making the trip much longer and more expensive than normal. The other reason for preferring informal channels is the undocumented status of most of the migrants originating from this area. Undocumented migrants often avoid formal and official ways of doing business.

By bringing remittances in person, migrants ensure that the money and goods are delivered to the intended beneficiaries. Both remitter and recipient know the amount of money and the goods that have been transferred, thus reducing the possibility of the remittances being delayed or not reaching their intended beneficiaries at all. However, the cost of travelling and the problems of meeting visa requirements make this the least preferred method of sending or receiving regular remittances. The value of the remittance is rarely sufficient to compensate for the costs involved. As a result, the reliability

of remittances is tied to the frequency of home visits. If the migrant has a regular visiting pattern, then the household is assured of receiving the remittances regularly, which helps them plan and budget for their use; if not, this creates uncertainty for the recipients who cannot plan and budget accurately.

TRANSMIGRATION AND OMAYALISHA

Remittances from migrants working in South Africa constitute a large share of household income and have a significant impact on the livelihoods of communities in the southern parts of rural Zimbabwe. Although a large proportion of the remittances are used for basic needs, remittances also help improve the standard of living for remittance-receiving households. However, the development potential of these remittances has yet to be fully exploited. Only 10 percent of the remittance-receiving households interviewed in Ward Seven invest remittances in formal businesses. Most of the businesses are traditional rural businesses such as general dealer shops, grinding mills and bottle stores. Although a number of migrants have acquired a variety of skills such as bricklaying, carpentry and welding, there are no formal established businesses specialising in these trades. The activities are informal, micro-scale and seasonal, making an insignificant contribution to employment creation. There is very little investment of remittances at the community level. Migrants have in the past made individual contributions towards refurbishing a mortuary at the local hospital, school development projects and sporting activities. These contributions have been ad hoc and largely uncoordinated.

Transnational communities create a variety of economic relationships across national boundaries. True transmigration is not just an occasional trip home or a sporadic financial contribution to a home country. Rather it is a phenomenon represented by the emergence of a new class of migrants who conduct intensive cross-border economic activities on a continuous basis. Cross-border transport operators, locally known as *omalayisha*, fit the description of "true transmigrants."⁹ The transnational experience of Zimbabwean migrants who have houses in the home country and travel home is very different from that of the *omalayisha* whose relations with their home country are radically different from those of other migrants.

There are two types of cross-border transport operator: full-time and part-time. Part-time operators have jobs in South Africa and provide transport on weekends, holidays

or when they are on leave. Operators charge a fee of R20 for every R100 of cash they deliver. The charge for transporting goods is determined by weight. There are no standardised methods of determining weight, such as scales; rather, the weight is determined by lifting the parcel and “feeling” its weight. Factors such as kinship relations and friendship influence the charge. Although the charge can be negotiated, the transport operator has more power in the negotiation process than the remitter.

Cross-border transport is a lucrative business. Besides the profit they generate in the transport business, the *omalayisha* double as foreign currency dealers. Many of those who invest in small businesses at home are also operators. Because they return home frequently, they manage to personally run their business at home while simultaneously earning income from their transport operations and (in the case of part-time operators) their jobs in South Africa.

Although both remitters and recipients complain about the operators’ exorbitant charges, it is a cheaper and more convenient option than receiving remittances through banks and the postal service because of travel-related costs to access these facilities. In many cases the operators deliver the remittances to the recipient’s doorstep. This is particularly convenient in the case of non-cash remittances, which are often bulky.

Cross-border transport operators are a very important channel of communication between migrants and their relatives back home. They not only transport people, goods and cash across borders but also transmit messages back and forth between the two countries. Letters and verbal reports delivered by cross-border transport operators, whether accompanying goods and cash or not, are a reliable source of information about the whereabouts, welfare and health of the migrants to their relatives. At the same time, letters and verbal reports delivered to migrants are an important source of information about the welfare, health and financial needs of relatives back home.

The globalisation of communication technology is, however, having a profound impact on the ability of migrants to maintain contact with home, especially as the fax and mobile phones have replaced what used to be snail-paced letter communication.¹⁰ Before the mobile phone revolution, communication between migrants and home communities was mainly through letters sent either by post or hand delivery by visiting migrants or transport operators. Limited telephone facilities were available at the local mission hospital, business centres and schools. Communication through these means

was generally very slow and unreliable. For example, letters which came through the mission were distributed to their recipients through schoolchildren. There were high risks of letters not reaching their intended destinations, or of being delayed or tampered with. Access to telephone facilities at the mission hospital or business centres was limited and to a very large extent dependent on personal relations between the service provider and the beneficiary.

Migrants in this study use technology to maintain close links with home. At the household level, the adoption of the mobile phone facilitates easy and constant communication between the migrants and those left behind. In order to facilitate communication with their relatives left behind, migrants invest in mobile phones which are sent back home and become very handy communication tools. Many households with migrant members now have mobile phones. The fees vary depending on the relationship between the service provider and the beneficiary. Access to the phone is usually for receiving messages and phoning out is restricted to urgent messages. This service is mainly for receiving phone calls and messages. The fees paid are determined by the service provider. The phones have South African lines and airtime cards are sent from South Africa by the migrants as part of the remittance package. Those that do not have phones can usually access the facility from neighbours and relatives.

CULTURAL TRANSNATIONALISM AND INJIVA

The contemporary phenomenon of transnationalism is as much a cultural as economic phenomenon. Transnational linkages encourage the emergence and consolidation of hybrid identities, merging cultural resources and practices from both origin and destination societies.¹¹ As members of transnational communities travel back and forth, they carry cultural and political currents in both directions. The cultural symbols and products they carry include language, dress, music and religious beliefs.

Most of the migrants interviewed for this study speak one or two South African languages. The acquisition of a local language is particularly necessary for undocumented migrants because failure to demonstrate mastery of at least one language often leads to arrest and deportation.¹² The South African police often use cultural signifiers and lack of language proficiency as markers of "foreignness." The local symbols and products acquired by migrants extend to dress, music, dances, style of walking, mannerisms

and food. The term *injiva* describes a distinct migrant way of life, radically different from that of members of the non-migrant community. *Injiva* involves a combination of characteristics such as language, dressing, preferences for music (usually the *kwaito* genre), type of dance, style of walking, mannerisms, food preferences and even temperament. Popular images of an *injiva* are of an individual predisposed to violence and ready to use or threaten the use of *umese* (knife) and *isibhamu* (gun) to settle even the smallest of disputes. Although use of guns is mostly confined to threats, cases of stabbing with knives are common. During the field work two people, a teacher and a businessman, were reported to have been stabbed to death by *injiva* in Ward Seven and a neighbouring Ward. In December 2005, an *injiva* was reported to have stabbed and seriously wounded his son after a dispute with his wife which started in South Africa.

The image of an *injiva* among the non-migrant community is reinforced by the visual images of South African life brought to the home community through television and video. Some parts of Matabeleland do not receive Zimbabwean radio and television signals and areas bordering South Africa such as Ward Seven get signals from neighbouring countries. To many young people, the characters shown on South African TV and captured on video such as the *Yizo-yizo* series represent the typical South African. While the *Yizo-yizo* series was criticized for depicting South African "ghetto" life as characterized by violence, sex, drugs, foul language and rebellion, many of its characters became heroes for viewers, including those in Zimbabwe.

The cultural impacts of transmigration on the home community often result in tensions and conflicts at the family as well as at the community levels. At the family level this conflict is often manifested as intergenerational, where the introduction of cultural symbols into the community by young migrants are often resisted by the elderly who are adherents to, and custodians of, tradition. Elderly members of the community are often contemptuous of the dress, language, style of walking and other behavioural traits exhibited by young migrants. Community elders often decry the loss of "local cultural values" due to migration.

Another cultural impact of transmigration is the transnationalisation of religion, especially of the African spiritual type known as *ziyoni* or *zayoni* (Zion). Adherents are referred to as *amaziyoni* or *amazayoni* (Zionists). Although there are several variants, the common feature of *amazayoni* is the predominance of the white colour in their uniforms (*izambatho*), with blue, green and red added to distinguish ranks and functions.

They can also be identified by their highly energetic dance repertoire called *idresi*, spiritual possession and divination. *Amazayoni* churches are not a new phenomenon in either South Africa or Zimbabwe. What is new is their increasing transnational nature demonstrated by the cross-border linkages between these churches, including the establishment of branches across borders, dual membership and joint meetings.

A notable feature is the phenomenal growth in the membership of these churches among the migrant community. There are several explanations for this. Migration, especially in its undocumented form, is risky and induces fear, uncertainty and anxiety among the migrants. Religion offers protection against arrest and deportation. It also offers a solution to unemployment by removing bad luck attributed to spells cast by jealous relatives or neighbours back home. HIV and AIDS is also an issue of concern among the migrant community and those left behind.¹³ Limited access to medical facilities leads many migrants who are infected to turn to spiritual healing as a solution.

There are growing cultural links between the migrants and the larger community in their home area. In December 2005, for example, migrants from Ward Seven organized a function aimed at explaining the *modus operandi* of migrant burial societies. It was also an opportunity for the burial societies to express their appreciation of the contribution by members of the home community in the repatriation and burial of the bodies of migrants who die in South Africa. This includes keeping night vigils, digging the graves and other arrangements for the burials. The event was attended by traditional, political and religious leaders as well as government functionaries and the general public. Leaders of the migrants' burial societies as well as community traditional, political and religious leaders addressed the gathering. The members of the migrants' burial societies donated soccer and netball balls to three primary schools and one secondary school in the Ward. Migrants have also maintained links with the community through participating in community projects such as the refurbishment of the mortuary at the local hospital, and sponsoring of community and schools sports, although this has been on an *ad hoc* basis.¹⁴

TRANSMIGRANTS AND POLITICS

Studies in other areas have found that transnational communities spread political influences across the borders. In their most advanced form, transnational networks have evolved into political communities by organizing themselves to lobby governments in

their home countries and demanding their rights to vote.¹⁵ Transnational communities have also been mobilized by political parties and governments in their home countries for financial and electoral support at home.

Although Zimbabwean migrants in this study expressed interest in political developments in both their host and home countries, there was no evidence of actual participation in political activities, especially elections, in either country. The main reason for the lack of active political participation in South Africa is their foreign and migrant status. Most of the migrants from the study area are undocumented which discourages them from engaging in public affairs or any activity that would bring them into the public realm.

Many migrants have managed to acquire South African identity documents. Nearly half (48 percent) actually possess South African passports. Despite this they tend to stay away from polling stations. They generally do not discard their Zimbabwean identity documents either. One of the reasons is to facilitate the repatriation of their body in the event of death. Generally when a migrant's body is repatriated back to Zimbabwe, this process becomes easier if the deceased's Zimbabwean identity is confirmed. The other reason for keeping Zimbabwean identity documents is to use them, as required, when they are in Zimbabwe.

Most do not participate in elections in Zimbabwe either. One of the reasons is that in recent elections migrants would have had to return home to vote. In order to vote, one has to first register as a voter. The process of registration is elaborate and tends to discourage many from participating. Before an election, prospective voters have to verify their registration. These processes take place at Provincial Registrar General's Offices although occasionally, mainly before an election, mobile units conduct voter registration and voter verification exercises. The distance from Ward Seven to the Provincial capital in Gwanda discourages many from registering as voters or verifying their registration. Although mobile voter registration and verification brings the process closer to the electorate, many of the migrants do not benefit as it takes place within specified time periods. Registration may not coincide with the time that the migrants are at home.

There is a general apathy towards the current political landscape in Zimbabwe and loss of confidence in electoral processes. Matabeleland South Province was also the

site of post-independence political violence which resulted in many people fleeing the country for fear of being accused of being dissidents or abetting dissident activities. Many in this part of the country argue that independence did not bring any significant development to the region compared to other regions of the country.

CONCLUSION

One of the notable effects of transnational migration is the growing "delocalization" of the household characterized by the absence of many members of the household for a considerable amount of time.¹⁶ Transnational families and transnational households are a prominent feature of transnational migration. Despite geographical dispersion, family and household members maintain such close relations that decisions and domestic activities are shared across borders on an almost daily basis. For example 51 percent of the respondents in the study indicated that remitters decided how the remittances they sent home were to be used.

Transnational migration gives rise to various combinations of domestic arrangements: male-headed and -managed, female-headed and -managed, male-headed and female-managed, grandparent-headed and -managed, grandparent-managed, child-managed, child-headed and migrant-managed. The traditional functions of the family and household (which include procreation, child-rearing and provision of food and shelter) are redefined, sometimes with negative impacts on the care and well-being of the dependent members of these groups such as minor children, the aged and the disabled. Such arrangements have emotional, social, psychological and economic impacts. Migrant spouses (mostly husbands) often develop sexual liaisons in the host country leading to marital stress when the wives discover the relationships. Family and household members left behind often assume the tasks and roles belonging to those who have gone, thus increasing their workloads. The majority of migrants are men. This means that the wives left behind assume the responsibilities of the men.

The most profound impact of transnational migration is on children. Migrating parents, especially mothers, transfer the care of children, including socialization, to grandparents, other relatives or even domestic workers. Motherhood is stretched across national boundaries creating transnational motherhood, an arrangement whereby migrant women work in South Africa while their children live in Zimbabwe. Many

migrant mothers of newly-born children must send their infants back home to be cared for by the extended family. There are even instances where children are left alone if both the mother and father are migrants.

Studies on the effects of labour migration in Southern Africa have often observed that emigration has negative impacts on agricultural production through loss of agricultural labour. More research is needed to establish the link between migration of parents and increased work burdens for children and the extent to which remittances sent by migrant parents are used to hire labour to substitute for those who have migrated. One study found that the migration of parents particularly mothers, increased the workload of children and adversely affected their education. There are cases where the migration of parents has a positive impact on children because of enhanced income. Migrant parents can hire labour to replace themselves as well as afford to send their children to school as they have money to pay school fees.

Transnational linkages, practices and identities are thus a growing phenomenon associated with contemporary migration to South Africa from southern Zimbabwe. While a substantial amount of general research and literature on transnational communities now exists, this chapter has focussed on the transnational experiences of undocumented transmigrants and the impact of this type of migration on the migrants themselves, their relatives left behind and their home communities.

NOTES

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WE ARE NOT UNITED

I am mainly involved in trading curios to tourists at the market. I usually sell wooden bowls, bowls made from wire and beads as well as crotchet work. In fact I sell a lot of things, a variety of things...anything that can be sold at the marketplace and has the potential to make money. Sometimes I buy Binga baskets. I buy most of the products from people who bring them from Zimbabwe. But I also make some of the goods myself, for example crotchet products. We know each other and they bring a lot of products. When you need something specific you tell them what you want and they bring it. But sometimes you can buy from others that you do not know as long as they have good products that will sell on the market. I was involved in the trade long before I came to live here. We used to bring our goods from Zimbabwe and then sell to people here in Cape Town who would then sell these goods direct to the tourists.

Initially Zimbabweans were not allowed to trade at the market place. There was no place for Zimbabweans. The officials used to chase us if we wanted to sell our products there. Then the Zimbabwean Embassy interceded on our behalf so that we could also be allowed to sell our curios there. You see, it was only Zimbabweans who were being arrested and forbidden from selling there while nationals from other countries were allowed. There were people from Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Cameroon and a lot of other countries who were also conducting business there. It was not fair – that is why our embassy had to come in on our behalf to intercede. Zimbabweans were some of the first foreigners to come here and trade in curios, so maybe that was the reason why they were targeted. A lot of people from

other countries who came afterwards were able to get permits while we could not.

Very few South Africans are involved in selling curios. The few that you find in the business are usually working for someone and not doing their own business. Mostly they are working for a Zimbabwean, a Kenyan or a Congolese. I have however seen one or two who started working for foreigners selling these curios and then ventured into the business on their own after seeing that it is profitable. Most of them associate with us and would even want to know how they can get to Zimbabwe to get goods for resale. They just want to learn what we do so that they can also be part of the business.

One thing that bothers me though is that people from other countries help each other a lot. When one of their own arrives in the country they all chip in with money to help set up the person in business. They can source their products as a group and then divide for resell, but we Zimbabweans do not seem to be able to do that. Maybe there are Zimbabweans elsewhere who do that but I have never heard of it. We are not united. The Congolese, the Cameroonians, the Kenyans and even the Somalis help each other. They help each other to start a business. They behave like relatives, like real brothers and sisters even though most of them only got to know each other while they were here. They do not want one of their own to have problems. Even when one of their own is arrested, or is in trouble, they help each other very much. They collect money when one of their own is in problems, but we seem not to be able to do so.



Chapter Sixteen

Metaphors of Migration: Zimbabwean Migrants in the South African Media

Aquilina Mawadza and Jonathan Crush

The rise of xenophobia in post-apartheid South Africa, culminating in the horrendous attacks on migrants in May 2008, has been extensively documented in a number of studies.¹ The role of the South African media in creating and perpetuating xenophobic stereotypes has also been analyzed in depth.² One of the major features of media reporting on migration in the 1990s was the emergence of a homogenizing discourse in which all migrants (legal or undocumented, male or female, skilled or unskilled) were lumped into overarching categories such as “aliens,” “illegals” and “foreigners.” No substantive distinction was made between migrants from different parts of the continent or globe. Indeed, migrants from neighbouring countries (with a long history of migration to and from South Africa) were as “foreign” (and unwelcome) as post-1994 migrants from further afield. Classification as an “alien” or a “foreigner” automatically implied that an individual migrant was necessarily party to the negative characteristics of that group – whether as bringers of disease and crime, takers of jobs or consumers of “our” resources. Media reporting on immigration in the 1990s was overwhelmingly negative and unanalytical.³

Media reporting after 2000 became a little more even-handed and analytical but overall remained disturbingly negative.⁴ One feature which has been less remarked

upon was the disaggregation of the previously monolithic categorization of "migrants as threat." Media sources began to spell out who was threatening and for what reasons. Nigerian migrants and Somali refugees, in particular, came in for particular criticism for their supposed penchant for drug-dealing and "dishonest" trading practices respectively. But what of Zimbabweans? How were they perceived and represented in the South African media at a time when migration from that country to South Africa was on the increase?

This chapter examines how the South African media understands Zimbabwean migration to South Africa. Particular attention is paid to the dominant metaphors that are used to characterize migrants themselves. The chapter argues that unlike Nigerians and Somalis, Zimbabweans are not associated with any one "national characteristic." Rather, all of the negative stereotypes that used to be applied to "aliens" and "foreigners" in general are now routinely applied to Zimbabweans. In other words, xenophobic media discourse has disaggregated to the level of national origin but no further. Zimbabwean migration to and from South Africa is a highly complex and variable phenomenon. There are many different "types" of migrants and just as many motives for migration. The implications of this migrant movement for both countries also varies considerably. None of this complexity and variability is allowed into the homogenizing media discourse targeted at Zimbabweans.

Globally, there is a surprising degree of consistency in the dominant negative metaphors used by the media to describe those deemed to have "violated" national territory and sovereignty or are poised to do so. The most common "metaphors of migration" include the depiction of migrants as threatening foreign or alien bodies; migration as a "natural disaster" (such as a flood or avalanche); migration as an aquatic process (migrants "flowing" or "pouring" into a country); migrants as a "burden"; and military metaphors as, for example, the state "battling" or "fighting" a foreign "invasion."⁵ All of these elements are present in contemporary South African media responses to Zimbabwean migration, sometimes individually, more often combined.

In order to create a database for study, two general sources – *SA Media and News 24* – were used. Both of these electronic websites source stories from a cross-section of hardcopy and electronic newspaper outlets and feeds (such as the South African Press Association or SAPA). The database spanned the period 1999-2006. Headlines and content were scanned for metaphorical representations of Zimbabwean migra-

tion and migrants. The articles were then classified in terms of their dominant migration metaphors, or combinations thereof. The results of the analysis are discussed in this chapter.

THE MIGRANT AS ALIEN

SA Authorities Confirm Wave of Illegal Zim Aliens: South African authorities have confirmed reports showing that the massive influx of illegal immigrants into the country shows no signs of abating. A total of 2,386 illegal immigrants have been arrested by the South African police since December 29, Limpopo police spokesperson Ronel Otto said on Monday. These border jumpers entered the country through the various border posts, including Beitbridge, Pontdrift, Groblers Bridge and Stokpoort (Mail and Guardian 30 January 2006)

Plan for Flood of Zim Aliens: The South African government is said to be considering building a second detention centre in Limpopo to cope with the influx of illegal immigrants from Zimbabwe (The Citizen 25 July 2006)

Zim Aliens Still Flow In (News24 30 January 2006)

Illegal Alien Appleseed Quits SA: Bongo Maffin musician Adrian Anesu Mupemhi "Appleseed" has gone back to Zimbabwe. Last night, Mupemhi voluntarily left South Africa for his home country after contravening the Aliens Control Act (Pretoria News 4 April 2002)

Secure Carriages on the Way: The government is about to introduce specially designed train carriages for the deportation of illegal aliens bound for Mozambique and Zimbabwe (Sowetan 31 March 2000)

Thousands Sent Home to Zimbabwe from SA: In a sign of intensifying crackdown, on Zimbabwean illegal aliens, South Africa deported 2345 Zimbabwean at the weekend (Cape Times 23 May 2002)

Illegal Aliens Die in Smash (Pretoria News 27 September 2002)

Ruling Limits Arrest of Illegal Aliens (Pretoria News 23 April 2003)

In popular western culture, the term "alien" obviously connotes hostile and dangerous non-human beings from outer space.⁶ While this term is obviously not meant to be taken literally in migration discourse, its metaphorical associations concerning "otherness" are clear. "Aliens" are, metaphorically-speaking, extraterrestrial – not of this earth (let alone this country) – different, strange, unknown and undesirable. The popular cultural connotations of the term are certainly not lost on the South African media who use it with a blithe disregard for context and truth. "Aliens" are completely foreign and different, hostile and unwelcome, a threat to the culture, way of life and economic livelihood of the citizen.

The extraterrestrial other is always particularly suspect because it cannot communicate in the "language(s)" of the host nation.⁷ South Africans are somewhat more accepting of migrants who speak South African languages through common ancestry (those from Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland).⁸ Migrants from other African countries, including Zimbabwe, are denigrated as *makwerekwere* because they do not speak the language of the local people. Seemingly unaware of the origins and highly insulting nature of this term, President Mbeki argued in the South African Parliament that there was nothing offensive or xenophobic about it.⁹

The alien metaphor is often associated with the idea of contamination of a healthy body.¹⁰ Antigens, or foreign particles that enter the body and elicit an immune response, are compared to "aliens" who are suspect because they cannot speak the "language" of the body.¹¹ In South Africa, the term "alien" is also extensively used in popular environmental discourse to describe non-indigenous plant species. "Alien" vegetation (even if it has been in South Africa for hundreds of years) is seen as a major threat to the viability of indigenous plants. Campaigns to root out and destroy "alien" species have been a constant, high-profile feature of post-apartheid South Africa. The same language of threat and contamination is used to describe migrants and plants deemed "alien:"

The phobia, which started out as a diffuse sense of misgiving, has congealed into an active antipathy to what is perceived as a shadowy alien-nation of "illegal immigrants" [their emphasis].... just as, in the plant world, invasive has become locked adjectivally to alien. Popularly held to be "economic vultures" who usurp jobs and resources, who foster crime, prostitution and disease, these Doppelgänger anti-citizens are accused – in uncanny analogy with non-indigenous flora – of spreading wildly out of control, and of siphoning off the rapidly diminishing wealth of the nation.¹²

Although the use of the term “alien” to describe non-citizens is still common in other parts of the world (notably the United States), its usage in South Africa is highly problematical. The term is closely associated with the racist immigration policies of the apartheid era, embodied in the Aliens Control Act of 1991 and its predecessors.¹³ In 2002, a new South African Immigration Act replaced the Aliens Control Act. The term “alien” is not used at all in the 2002 Act, a concession by its drafters to the opposition of human rights groups to the retention of incendiary language in the new legislation. The Act refers to all non-citizens as “foreigners” (which is an improvement but hardly dispels the negative connotations of “otherness” associated with the term “alien”). However, while South Africa’s official immigration discourse now eschews the term “alien,” the media has been extremely reluctant to jettison it, so strong is the emotive negative weight of the term.

The application of the term “illegal alien” to Zimbabweans has led to a new variant: “the Zim alien.” The continued use of the metaphor to describe Zimbabwean migrants, in particular, is therefore very deliberate, stripping them of their humanity, emphasizing difference and marking them as outsiders that do not belong. As such, they are undeserving of basic respect, rights and freedoms, a sentiment with which most ordinary South Africans agree.¹⁴

The “alien” is not only unnatural and unwelcome, it is also illegitimate and threatening. The South African media is certainly not alone in its association of irregular migration with illegality.¹⁵ “Illegal aliens,” “illegal immigrants” or simply “illegals” are terms used by states worldwide to describe anyone who is not wanted but who comes anyway. The UN, the Global Commission on Migration and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) propose that the term “irregular migrant” be used to describe those in a country without proper documentation, a proposal not popular with nation-states who prefer to see border transgression as a criminal rather than unauthorized act. The South African media has continued to make copious use of the terms “illegal alien” and “illegal immigrant” to describe Zimbabwean migrants.

Thus, the very act of being in South Africa is criminalized by the South African media. Only rarely is there reference to the many thousands of Zimbabweans who are in South Africa quite legitimately, as professionals, students, traders, visitors and the like. Attention is focused on demonizing, on making illegitimate and dangerous, the presence of all Zimbabweans. When the South African Police Services release the results

of "crime-busting" operations, for example, they normally list (together with the arrest of murderers, rapists, hijackers and thieves) the number of "illegal immigrants" they have apprehended. They are rarely called "*suspected* illegal immigrants." Guilt is assumed and, in many cases, created. The police are notorious both for their destruction of documents and demands for bribes.¹⁶ The measure of the success of a crime-fighting blitz is often the number of migrants arrested. There is an inherent contradiction here. While it might be argued that these migrants are "breaking the law" and therefore engaged in a "criminal activity," migrants suspected of being in the country illegally are not given the right to due process or a fair trial accorded other suspected criminals. They are rounded up and deported as expeditiously as possible. Little has changed in this respect with the Immigration Act of 2002 which has singularly failed to protect migrants from the more egregious violations of their rights licensed by the Aliens Control Act.¹⁷ The media – particularly newswire services such as the South African Press Association (SAPA) – simply parrot the police interpretation of their own activities, uncritically reproducing these police press statements which link migration with crime.

By defining migrants as criminals, without any evidence of criminal activity, the media conveniently overlooks the immense contributions they make by working hard for low wages and by creating jobs for South Africans. The "illegal Zim alien" metaphor exaggerates the severity of a victimless technical offence. Migrants who cross outside of legal channels, though, are committing offenses of a much different nature than the prototypical criminal. Their "crime" is not to cause harm or to steal but to work and make money to send home to starving relatives. The metaphor dehumanizes the migrant, disqualifying serious media debate on such questions as why people come to South Africa, what service they provide when they are there, and why some find it necessary to avoid the legal channels that they respect.

MIGRATION AND DANGEROUS WATERS

We voluntarily switched off the apartheid electric border fence. But the economic meltdown in Zimbabwe is forcing us to think about how to contain the avalanche of illegal economic and political refugees from Zimbabwe. Failure to do something about this risks hostility from our unemployed and poor directed at the foreigners flooding into South Africa. If the hostility

is minimal now, wait until our economy slows down (News 24 7 October 2006)

Zim Aliens Flow In (News24 30 January 2006)

Zimbabweans Pouring into SA (Mail and Guardian 30 January 2006)

SA Authorities Confirm Wave of Illegal Zim Aliens: South African authorities have confirmed reports showing that the massive influx of illegal immigrants into the country shows no signs of abating (Mail and Guardian 30 January 2006).

Illegals Flood Across River as Limpopo Subsides: As the Limpopo river subsides, following the devastating floods in February, illegal immigrants are beginning to flock across the border from Zimbabwe into South Africa again (The Star 18 August 2000)

Botswana Faces Flood of Illegal Immigrants (Mail and Guardian 30 August 2001).

Growing Tide of Refugees (Cape Times 23 May 2002)

The Unstoppable Tide (Mail and Guardian 3 October 2003)

Holding Back the Human Tide: Every month thousands of Zimbabweans are caught trying to enter South Africa illegally. But poverty will drive them to do it again (Sunday Tribune 3 February 2002)

A report on this page exposes the futility of the government's attempt to stem the tide of thousands of illegal immigrants flooding the country in search of better life (Pretoria News 25 September 2005)

Metaphors from the natural world are particularly common to describe the movement of Zimbabweans into South Africa. Migration is not, however, considered to be a "natural process" so much as a "natural disaster" deeply threatening to all South Africans. Zimbabwean migrants do not migrate as individuals or in small groups. Rather they come in "floods," "waves" and "tides," swamping everything in their path. "Alien body" and "natural disaster" metaphors are regularly combined to give added emphasis to the destructiveness of the disaster.

In other words, this is not a tidal wave or avalanche of "people" or "migrants;" it is one of "Zim aliens," "illegal immigrants" and "illegal foreigners." Aquatic meta-

phors suggest large-scale, excessive, uncontrollable and dangerous inflows of water.¹⁸ Migrants "pour" they do not "trickle." They come in "waves" and "floods." The borders of the nation-state, unless systematically and comprehensively fortified, provide no defence against the tide. While some suggest that the disastrous tide is "unstoppable," others argue that it should and must be stopped through more draconian measures.

The penetration of borders by migrants is amplified in the discourse of migrant-receiving states by the "metaphor of the container."¹⁹ National territory is represented as a contained space of fixed size or volume.²⁰ The three salient spatial structures are the interior ("us"), the exterior ("them") and the boundary (the physical and metaphorical line that divides us from them, insiders from outsiders). This schema "grounds conceptualizations of one's country as a closed container that can be sealed or penetrated."²¹ The container metaphor denotes a bounded area protecting what is within from external danger. Penetration of the boundary of the container implies the contamination of its contents, "them" symbolically and illegitimately penetrating "us."²² Penetration is a dangerous and illegitimate act with destructive consequences primarily because "what is inside is close to the self, and what is outside is also outside the law."²³ Container metaphors also arouse fears of a build up of large numbers of undesirable migrants within. Once inside, the migrant is a *makwerekere* to be feared, ostracized and insulted.

South Africa, too, is represented as a fixed and bounded container with immutable boundaries that divide people into two groups: insiders and outsiders, the in-group and the out-group, South Africans and "Zims." Mandela's "rainbow nation" has become a closed container whose boundaries are being transgressed by massive numbers of Zimbabwean migrants. A particularly common variant of boundary-transgression in South Africa is the idea that migrants do not cross or travel across borders, they "jump" or "hop" them. The metaphor, while appearing to describe how borders are crossed illegitimately, is designed to convey the fact that migrants have a fundamental lack of respect for the line between the two countries. In fact, as research by SAMP has shown, Zimbabwean migrants do have a basic respect for the existence and integrity of national borders. This is not to say that there is no border transgression. Rather it is to argue that the metaphorical representation of transgression both exaggerates its prevalence and perpetuates an image of migrants as displaying criminal intent and a callous disregard for national sovereignty.

MIGRATION AS INVASION

Illegal immigrants are law breakers who pose a threat to South Africa by placing a heavy strain on the country's resources (Sowetan 11 February 2000)

Deporting Aliens just a Futile and Costly Exercise (City Press 29 May 2005)

Foreigners are Stealing our Birthright: Musina, on the border town of South Africa and Zimbabwe has supposedly been taken over by illegal immigrants, some of whom obtained South African identity documents fraudulently. Some of the Zimbabweans have taken over RDP houses meant for poor South Africans while others cross the border illegally to claim child grants for their children (The Star 6 February 2006)

The department of home affairs has taken a financial knock from the influx of illegal immigrants (News 24 23 July 2006)

As hundreds of Zimbabweans flock into SA daily, the repercussions are said to have been felt mostly by the Department of Health, which has had to deal with increasing numbers of patients, putting pressure on hospitals (The Citizen 25 July 2006)

The influx is impacting negatively on the municipality's capacity to provide basic services as we are over-stretched (The Star 6 February 2006)

Military metaphors in South African reporting on Zimbabwean migration to South Africa have three basic elements. First, the country is experiencing an unwanted "invasion" by hostile forces. Second, the state is engaged in a fight, a battle, a war to contain migration. Third, the invaders consume resources and deprive citizens of what is rightfully theirs. The trope of "invasion" has deep roots in South African political and media discourse. In the apartheid era, the politicians and the media fed the white populace an unrelenting diet of images about their country being invaded from the "north" – by the so-called "black peril," the red peril and (even historically) the clandestine migration peril. While the country is no longer embroiled in an actual war, the militaristic language and imagery of a country still at war is very much present in reporting on migration. This is now a country under siege from "illegal aliens" emanating from the rest of Africa.

South African press coverage of migration from Zimbabwe is full of images and claims about the burden that the invasion places on South Africans. The manipulation of numbers is particularly important here. The greater the number, the greater the burden. No one knows exactly how many Zimbabweans are in South Africa (legal or undocumented). In the absence of reliable numbers, the media is free to invent its own numbers. Zimbabweans supposedly threaten the viability and stability of "the nation" by endangering its physical and moral health, and its ability to provide services, employment, and to control crime. They place a heavy burden on South Africa's housing, welfare, education, health and immigration services. Zimbabweans, in general, are also stereotyped as "job stealers" with a detrimental effect on the employment situation by depriving South Africans of work opportunities. Zimbabweans are takers not creators of opportunity. This view fails to recognize the role of migrants and immigrants in generating employment opportunities for South Africans and contributing to the country's skills base and social and cultural diversity.

CONCLUSION

During the xenophobic carnage that swept South African townships in May 2008, the media was quick to distance itself from suggestions that it was in any way responsible for the outrage. Indeed, with the exception of the tabloid press, most news sources reacted with a degree of outrage and condemnation. In the many explanations advanced for the violence, however, few were prepared to directly tackle the issue of xenophobia. Indeed, ex-President Mbeki's astonishing claim that there was no xenophobia in the country was reported as a matter of fact. While the media can work itself up over Mbeki's HIV/AIDS "denialism," no such criticism was directed at his xenophobia "denialism."

The media is distinctly uncomfortable with the reality that xenophobia is a pervasive and deep-rooted phenomenon in South Africa. The reason is not hard to see. It is impossible to answer the question "Why are South Africans so xenophobic?" without addressing the issue of the culpability of the media. That the media are not simply responding to events but actively shaping South African popular opinion on migration is incontrovertible. Media xenophobia in migration reporting was identified as a serious problem in the 1990s. The evidence was ignored and nothing was done. So the negative discourses around migrants and migration, with their accompanying fleet

of pejorative metaphors, have continued to exercise their pernicious effects through to the present.

What has changed over the last decade is the growing focus on one particular migration movement, that from Zimbabwe. All of the metaphors that used to be applied to African migrants in general have been increasingly focused on Zimbabwe and migration from Zimbabwe. Clearly, Zimbabwean migration to (and, of course, from) South Africa has increased significantly. But does it warrant the labels "flood," "tidal wave" and "avalanche?" Even if the numbers were in the millions (which they clearly are not), the media's response would be unjustified. In fact, the media seems completely unable to refrain from slipping into highly provocative language designed to alienate, stigmatize and dehumanize the migrant. The media may not have directly incited the violence of May 2008, but it certainly prepared the way.

NOTES

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EXPERIENCING XENOPHOBIA

I came to South Africa in 2006 because of the bad political situation in Zimbabwe. I was an opposition party member and I felt that it was no longer safe for me to continue living in Zimbabwe because of the constant harassment which I suffered at the hands of the ruling party activists. I stay close to the city centre. I do not feel safe living in the townships anymore mainly because of the xenophobic violence which occurred last year. We experienced the violence last year after the Easter holidays. I was living in Atteridgeville. The violence were triggered by the fact that the foreigners, particularly those from countries such as Zimbabwe, were working and were earning more money than the native South Africans. Most foreigners were gainfully employed while most native South Africans were not. During weekends the foreigners had parties because they had the money. The South Africans began accusing the foreigners of taking jobs from South Africans.

When the attacks began, they struck at my neighbour's house first. At that time we thought that it was not something serious. We realised that it was a serious problem when they burnt my neighbour's house. They arrived at my house; they began threatening me. They were moving in a very large group. One of them slapped me on the cheek. They were not making any specific demands. They were just making noise, would take your belongings or burn some of the things and even beat you. They would say certain things in their own language which we did not understand. We could tell from the way they were talking that they were not saying nice things. From my own view, the attackers had different motives. Most of them just

wanted to steal people's belongings. If you resisted that's when they will beat you. I resisted at first. When they burnt my neighbour's house, I ran towards the graveyard which was close to our place. They pursued us into the graveyard. I could not tell how many people they were as more and more people joined in as the attacks continued. It was dark at the time and so I could not tell how many they were.

When we got into the graveyard we met other people who were also running away. We also met an elderly man who was carrying his television. I told the old man to leave the television but he refused. I ran leaving the man behind. When I was a few meters away from him I heard the man crying. I think they had found him and beat him up. We continued running into a bushy area and the attackers caught up with us and started pursuing us. We continued running along the railway line when we saw another group of attackers throwing stones in a bushy area like they were hunting for something. We managed to avoid them and we slept in the bush that night.

Early in the morning of the following day we went to a police station from where we were later taken to a school. They said they were going to find a temporary shelter for all the people who had been affected by the xenophobic violence. I think there were around 50 people. Afterwards we went to our houses to get our belongings, but there was nothing left, everything had been destroyed. Xenophobia affected us a lot and even affected our employment. Our employer had a number of Zimbabweans working for him and he started receiving anonymous calls from South Africans threatening unspecified action on him if he did not dismiss all the foreign workers that he employed. Fearing for his safety, our employer laid us off. I had worked for that company for almost a year.



Chapter Seventeen

Silence and Fragmentation: South African Responses to Zimbabwean Migration

Tara Polzer

The recent movement of people from Zimbabwe to South Africa is one of the largest concentrated inflows of migrants in South African history. A rapid influx of hundreds of thousands of people would be treated by most countries as a serious crisis requiring immediate intervention. Yet South Africa's official reaction to this movement has been characterised by a studied determination not to acknowledge that anything is out of the ordinary. South African diffidence has been especially evident at the highest levels of government and within various ministries and departments, but it can also be seen in organised civil society. These groups have all have failed to recognise the specific nature and challenges of contemporary Zimbabwean migration. In practice, the impacts of migration are left to Zimbabwean social networks, (often poor) South African citizens and local level public service providers to address. The fragmented and inadequate set of responses has produced two major disjunctures: first, between the needs of Zimbabwean migrants and the capacity and/or motivation of formal institutional frameworks and services; and secondly, between the impact of Zimbabwean migration and the ability to manage these impacts.

This chapter examines the range of informal and formal South African responses to Zimbabwean migration by key governmental and civil society actors up until late 2008.

Three different perspectives are proposed for evaluating these responses: a law and rights-centred perspective; a developmental and migrant needs-centred perspective; and a politics and institution-centred perspective. Each of these perspectives asks a different central question and each highlights the roles of different actors within the heterogeneous categories of "government" and "civil society."

A legal and rights-based perspective looks at the international and domestic legal responsibilities of the South African government towards Zimbabwean migrants and asks what government responses *should* be and how existing responses compare with these responsibilities and obligations. The key actors are governmental departments particularly Home Affairs and the social welfare departments of Health, Education, Social Development and Labour, the South African Police Services, and local municipalities. The role of civil society from this perspective is either to monitor government actions and press government to fulfil its obligations or to fill service gaps by providing parallel services.

In contrast, a migrant-centred and developmental perspective focuses on the question of *what* Zimbabwean migrants actually do and need and how governmental and civil society responses support or undermine these needs, regardless of whether or not they are enshrined in law. An example is the need of most Zimbabweans in South Africa to earn and remit money and goods to family members remaining in Zimbabwe. This is a key developmental issue but not one that is clearly defined as a right in either domestic or international law. From this perspective, Zimbabweans themselves are key actors in their own right, both as individuals and through more or less formal associations. Here, informal practices, relations and structures within governmental and non-governmental spheres in South Africa are as important as formal policies.

Finally, a political and institutional perspective asks *why* South African institutions have responded to Zimbabwean migration in the ways they have. The overall lack of an "emergency" atmosphere – the "business as usual" approach – requires explanation. More particularly, it is necessary to explain why certain responses have been adopted while others have been rejected or ignored, and why the responses by different actors remain essentially fragmented rather than coordinated. In addition to the governmental and non-governmental actors considered in the legal/rights perspective, a political perspective brings in actors not otherwise directly involved in providing services to, or making policies about, Zimbabweans in South Africa but who have important impacts

on the context in which such policies are made. Such groups include the Office of the Presidency, the ruling African National Congress party and Parliament.

Considered together, these perspectives lead to the conclusion that the South African government has not fulfilled its international or domestic legal obligations towards Zimbabwean migrants, resulting in significant abuses of migrant rights. Civil society has been largely ineffective in putting pressure on the government to change its policies and practices in relation to Zimbabweans and has also not been able to mobilise and coordinate a sufficient parallel welfare support and protection system. Responses to the welfare and protection needs of migrants are instead located mainly among Zimbabwean networks and in poor South African communities. They have therefore been decentralised, localised and informal. With rising numbers and the increasing vulnerability of Zimbabweans coming into South Africa since 2005, these informal networks and localised responses are increasingly unable to fulfil basic welfare and livelihood needs.

MIXED MIGRATION FROM ZIMBABWE TO SOUTH AFRICA

The nature of a specific migration situation determines not only which responses are necessary and appropriate, but also how decision-makers come to perceive and understand the migration flow and how they react to it. For example, though there are no empirically reliable statistics on the number of Zimbabweans who have entered South Africa since 2000, highly exaggerated estimates running into the millions are commonly cited by politicians and the media.¹ City officials in Johannesburg unrealistically claim that there are 2.5 million foreigners in the city, most of whom are said to be Zimbabwean. To put this into perspective, this would account for over half of the city's total population.² However, rather than triggering a concerted government response, as might be expected, perceptions about numbers have served only to delay action. Government officials (especially at the national level) argue that they cannot plan without more exact statistics, while officials at the municipal level and in service delivery departments seem completely paralyzed by their inflated perceptions of numbers.

With regard to the intensity of the flow of Zimbabweans into South Africa, there certainly has been a continuous, and growing daily (or nightly), movement of Zimbabweans across the border since 2000. South African emergency plans prepared in advance of the 2002, 2005 and 2008 Zimbabwean elections all described the trigger

for action as a "mass influx," defined in 2002 as a thousand people crossing the border in a day.³ Even though the cumulative number of Zimbabweans has by far overwhelmed the capacity of existing, non-emergency immigration and welfare interventions, an emergency response was never initiated because there has been no recognisable "mass influx." Perceptions about what a large-scale migrant movement should "look like" hindered concerted institutional action.

Another characteristic of Zimbabwean migration since 2000 has been its "mixed" nature. Mixed motivations are the norm for most migrant movements, but Zimbabwe is an extreme case where there is political repression without outright civil war and where progressive economic collapse has reached deadly proportions. There are therefore many different "types" of Zimbabwean migrants who are motivated to leave their country by a multitude of factors. These "types" include politically-persecuted refugees, economic migrants (from professionals to unskilled persons), humanitarian migrants (including unaccompanied children), traders, shoppers, and transit migrants.

Economically-motivated migration to South Africa was the most common type before 2006. Zimbabwean migrants fit the long-established pattern of labour migration and, until recently, were largely self-sufficient in terms of basic welfare due to their ability and desire to work. This reduced the demand for either government or civil society to plan large-scale welfare interventions. The motivation to earn money to send home and the presence of existing networks led Zimbabweans to disperse throughout the country and especially the urban areas rather than remaining concentrated in the rural border area with Zimbabwe. As a result, the initial impact of the large numbers was also dispersed, delaying the perceived pressure for national emergency responses. This meant that any legal and welfare responses had to be dispersed or accessible across the country, involving a wide range of governmental and civil society actors in different provinces and cities. This required a more complex and easily fragmented response scenario than if, for example, resources and institutional response capacity were concentrated in one part of the country.

After 2006, there was an increase in humanitarian migrants in search of basic food and health care, including larger percentages of women, children and the elderly.⁴ Levels of malnutrition and illness amongst new arrivals have increased greatly. When the humanitarian needs of newer arrivals and those already in the country rose gradually, there was again no clear trigger for the establishment of new welfare interventions until

needs reached crisis levels in specific locations (such as in the border area after mid-2008).

The implications of “mixed migration” for host countries are many. Different types of migrants need different services. They are also subject to different legal frameworks and the responsibility of different kinds of governmental and civil society institutions. There are no international or domestic legal frameworks for dealing with “mixed migration” in a holistic manner.⁵ As a result, separate legal instruments are usually applied to different forms of migration. In South Africa’s case, the Refugee Act, the Immigration Act and the Disaster Management Act have all been applied without adaptation or coherence. Furthermore, the South African government’s view, expressed explicitly on several occasions until as late as mid-2008, is that most migration from Zimbabwe is essentially illegitimate and illegal. This undermined the possibility of constructing a coordinated response for all Zimbabweans in South Africa.

Finally, “mixed migration” means that migrants have a wide range of needs against which the effectiveness of responses (and the choices of response institutions) should be evaluated. These include the immediate humanitarian need for food, shelter and health care; longer term social welfare needs for the same things, as well as education for children; livelihood needs for income opportunities, labour rights and access to remittance channels; and finally, the need for protection (including physical safety, legal security and non-refoulement).⁶ This wide range of needs implicates a broad range of institutions within government and civil society and requires a significant level of coordination among these very different actors.

MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AND SOCIOECONOMIC RIGHTS

South Africa’s current policy and institutional framework was not set up to deal with large-scale migration flows and it has never had to deal with such a situation before. In contrast to countries where large numbers of refugees have been housed in camps for many years, South Africa’s general policy of urban self-sufficiency and self-settlement for refugees means that there are no institutions in place to provide large-scale shelter and welfare assistance. It is precisely this discrepancy between need and response infrastructure, which makes it necessary to explain South Africa’s “business as usual” attitude. This approach has been most pronounced in the migration management field, where

the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) is the lead actor. South African migration frameworks have been applied to Zimbabweans in the same way as to other nationalities without any adaptation to their specific circumstances or numbers. These frameworks include visa regulations, the 2002 Immigration Act and the 1998 Refugee Act.

The desire of the South African government not to introduce policy changes in relation to Zimbabweans is exemplified by its longstanding visa policy. While visas were progressively liberalised and abolished for other neighbouring countries after 2000, as envisioned for the entire region by the SADC Protocol for the Facilitation of Movement of Persons, it was not until May 2009 that Zimbabweans were finally allowed 90-day visa-free entry.⁷ Prior to this change, Zimbabweans required a valid passport, an expensive visa from the South African Embassy in Harare, a letter of invitation, proof of sufficient hard currency for their stay in South Africa and an array of other guarantees which were impossible for all but a very few well-off Zimbabweans to meet. So onerous and costly were these preconditions that they forced the majority of Zimbabweans to cross into South Africa informally and without proper documentation.

The "business as usual" response to Zimbabweans in the country is also seen in their continuing arrest and deportation on the basis of the provisions of the Aliens Control Act (until 2002) and the Immigration Act thereafter. Deportations of Zimbabweans have risen steadily since 2000, surpassing those to Mozambique, and reaching 150,000 in 2005. Since 2005, Zimbabweans have been by far the largest national group deported, and have fuelled a massive overall increase in annual deportation numbers.⁸ The primacy of deportation as a response strategy clearly shows that the DHA and the South African Police Services continue to see Zimbabweans primarily as economic migrants rather than as people in need of humanitarian assistance or asylum.

Skilled Zimbabweans have continued to apply for, and receive, normal work and study permits, and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) reported a steep rise in applications by professional Zimbabweans.⁹ Here the "business as usual" approach meant no special measures to facilitate or expedite Zimbabwean work or study permits or qualifications approvals beyond the normal (expensive and slow) processes.

Asylum applications from Zimbabweans rose steadily after 2004 but had cumulatively still only reached 44,000 by the end of 2007. At that time, only 1,000 had been approved, 9,000 were rejected and 34,000 were still pending. In 2007 itself, 17,667

Zimbabweans applied for asylum but only 271 were approved and 1,628 rejected.¹⁰ The DHA responded to the increase in asylum applications in a conservative and “business as usual” manner. There were some indications of attempts at exclusion, such as a “white listing” of Zimbabwean asylum applicants in 2002 by some Refugee Reception Offices and several “manifestly unfounded” asylum rejections in 2007. These were challenged in court by legal NGOs and, as a result, outright rejections became no more widespread for Zimbabweans than for other nationalities.

The asylum system has taken a narrow interpretation of the Refugee Act which makes it less responsive to the particularities of Zimbabwean migration than it could be. The Department has largely limited its status determination to persons fleeing individual persecution, effectively excluding the majority of Zimbabweans. Also, the location of Refugee Offices and administrative inefficiencies in the asylum application process have severely restricted access to the system, even for those individuals who have experienced personal political persecution. The Refugee Act does provide for the DHA to grant *a priori* refugee status to a group of persons or to grant individual asylum to persons fleeing “events seriously disturbing or disrupting public order.”¹¹ There has been a debate between civil society and the UNHCR about whether this definition (based on the 1969 OAU Convention) could be applied to all Zimbabweans. The Jesuit Refugee Services has advocated that all Zimbabweans should qualify for asylum under the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) Convention definition on the basis that the economic crisis which is driving many Zimbabweans to emigrate in search of work and food is in fact a politically-created crisis.¹² On the other hand, the UNHCR has stated that most Zimbabweans would not qualify under the OAU refugee definition.¹³

The use of different legal frameworks for migration management could be interpreted as a sign that the government recognises the diversity of Zimbabwean migration. However, none of the standard migration management instruments have been able to fulfil their functions because they have been applied indiscriminately and not adapted to the mixed nature of Zimbabwean migration. For example, even if it were considered legally legitimate to deport “illegal economic migrants” back to starvation and poverty in Zimbabwe, in practice, the policy has led to the refoulement of political asylum seekers who have not been able to access the asylum system.

The asylum system, due to the lack of alternatives, is being used by people predominantly seeking humanitarian and livelihood support. In late 2008, the DHA effectively

legitimised this strategy by setting up a refugee reception centre in Musina (near the Zimbabwean border crossing), and issuing asylum-seeker permits to virtually all Zimbabweans coming to the centre, without attempting to judge the validity of their asylum claims. Even though this could be seen as an appropriate expansion of the asylum definition, the asylum-seeker permits are being used as a temporary stop-gap measure, without consideration of how the DHA will later deal with the need to renew these permits or to confirm or reject them through a formal refugee status determination process.

Though several possible migration management responses were proposed during 2008, none were taken up by the DHA. The Immigration Act, for example, provides for a Ministerial exemption from standard permit requirements. The possibility of granting a temporary permit to all Zimbabweans, including the right to be in the country legally and the right to work, in terms of Section 31(2)b of the Immigration Act was debated within the DHA. The Minister made media announcements concerning the possibility of introducing such a permit in mid-2007 and again in mid-2008 but to date it has not been implemented.¹⁴ There were also discussions within the DHA about putting a moratorium on the deportation of Zimbabweans. This too failed to come to fruition and arrests and deportations continue.

The government's socioeconomic policy response to Zimbabwean migration has a different legal basis (the Constitution and the Disaster Management Act) and is located in different departments (Health, Education, Housing, Social Development, Labour) and levels of government (provincial, local and municipal). With a few minor exceptions, these actors also continued with "business as usual" and did not institute any special or expanded interventions in relation to Zimbabweans.

The Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution sets out basic socioeconomic (in addition to civil) rights for "everyone," without discrimination by nationality or legal status.¹⁵ These include the right to basic health care and education, adequate housing, sufficient food and water, and social security. It also includes the right to fair labour practices, although not the right to work. Different government departments are responsible for upholding these rights through public service delivery. But when Zimbabweans have tried to access their constitutional rights in South Africa, many have experienced discrimination and exclusion from public services (especially basic health care and education). In a recent survey of non-citizens, over 70 percent of Zimbabweans interviewed were able to access basic public health care when they needed it and 55 percent of

school-aged Zimbabwean children were attending school.¹⁶ This means that almost a third have had difficulties accessing health care, especially public health care, and that half of the school-aged children are not receiving the education to which they have a basic right.¹⁷

Zimbabweans have certainly posed a large-scale service challenge to South Africa. However, there have been neither significant dedicated responses by the government nor concerted and coordinated efforts to integrate Zimbabweans into mainstream social welfare service provision. In 2007, the Department of Health did issue a directive that antiretroviral treatment for HIV and AIDS should be made available to “refugees and asylum seekers irrespective of whether they hold documents.”¹⁸ However, there was no evaluation of which local clinics and hospitals were under additional pressure from Zimbabwean settlement (such as in certain inner-city neighbourhoods of Johannesburg and some rural areas of Limpopo Province) nor provision of additional funding and staff to those health services. There have also been no directives or resource allocation initiatives by the Departments of Education, Housing or Social Development. One of the Department of Social Development’s standard social welfare grants – the Social Relief of Distress grant – is not limited to citizens and could be applied as an emergency humanitarian relief mechanism. However, it has consistently failed to be promoted in this way. The Department of Social Development is also mandated to provide services to unaccompanied minors, yet has not implemented a sufficiently large-scale programme for the increasing numbers of unaccompanied Zimbabwean youths and children crossing into South Africa.

The 2002 Disaster Management Act provides the government with a legal framework for providing welfare and protection in emergency situations. Managed through the Department of Provincial and Local Government, where the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) is located, the Act pertains to situations where settlement “causes or threatens to cause: (i) death, injury or disease; (ii) damage to property, infrastructure or the environment; or (iii) disruption of the life of a community; and is of a magnitude that exceeds the ability of those affected by the disaster to cope with its effects using only their own resources.”¹⁹

The Disaster Management framework was used to prepare a national disaster management contingency plan as well as a Limpopo provincial plan and a municipal-level plan in the Musina border area. Yet, no disaster was declared at the national, provincial

or municipal level in relation to Zimbabwean migration and none of these plans had been implemented by late 2008 (nor, indeed, were they regularly updated, except in advance of Zimbabwean elections). In 2007, the opposition Democratic Alliance briefly mooted the idea of a "camp" or some kind of centralised welfare centre for Zimbabweans under the Disaster Management legislation, but this was rejected by the DHA and not publically debated again.²⁰

Local governments can always apply their discretion in providing localised services to migrants (or implementing localised migration control measures) based on their own resources and by-laws. Such initiatives could potentially contribute significantly to the overall combination of government responses, but they have not yet done so. For example, in 2007, the Johannesburg City Council debated whether a municipal building should be allocated as accommodation for Zimbabweans in the city. No action was taken.

In sum, the South African government has failed to meet its legal obligations to Zimbabwean migrants, including its obligation to prevent refoulement and to uphold basic constitutional rights. The practical reality is that the existing systems have become completely overloaded, making them less effective at performing their mandated tasks, even for citizens. The arrest and deportation of so many people requires significant policing resources and the asylum system overall has been brought virtually to a standstill because of the growing number of Zimbabwean applicants.

LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT FROM GOVERNMENT

The welfare needs of Zimbabwean migrants have been well-documented.²¹ In a 2007 survey of over 4,000 Zimbabweans conducted in Johannesburg, the respondents' priority needs included securing refugee status (mentioned by 57 percent), setting up a small business (47 percent), obtaining a work permit (37 percent) and obtaining employment commensurate with their qualifications (35 percent).²² A much smaller number mentioned UN assistance in repatriation to Zimbabwe (5 percent), legal assistance (4 percent) and HIV counselling and treatment in government hospitals (4 percent).²³ A recent study of anti-retroviral provision to non-citizens in Johannesburg found that government clinics were consistently referring non-citizen patients to non-governmental clinics and private hospitals for medication and care, in effect abrogating their public duty to provide health care.²⁴

The skills crisis in South Africa, and the relatively high skill levels of many Zimbabwean migrants, might have opened up opportunities for preferential or targeted recruitment (including fast-track work permits) by South African employers. The Department of Education did introduce an initiative to facilitate the employment of qualified Zimbabwean teachers in 2007, but this was not implemented widely, and other Departments have made no effort to recruit badly-needed doctors, nurses, engineers and so on.²⁵ The Departments of Trade and Industry, Social Development and other government bodies tasked with supporting small business development have made no attempt to include Zimbabweans in their programmes – either as beneficiaries or as partners.

South Africa's asylum system allows recognised asylum seekers and refugees to work and to set up businesses, but the number of Zimbabweans able to access this provision has been small. Private employers have often not recognised or known about the right of asylum seekers and refugees to work, and there has been no initiative from the Department of Labour to educate employers in this regard. This is an issue that is relevant to all asylum seekers and refugees, regardless of nationality.

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION

The most striking failure of the South African government has been its inability or unwillingness to articulate an overall policy position on migration from Zimbabwe. The fragmentation and timidity of responses by various government departments hinge on the lack of central direction as to how Zimbabwean migration should be understood and what the government's position should be. There is therefore no operational framework in place for coordinating government interventions.

While the South African government has been very forthright in articulating and defending its policies towards political developments in Zimbabwe, no public policy statements on Zimbabwean migration to South Africa have come from the Presidency, Parliament, Cabinet, or the National Executive Committee of the ruling African National Congress. In May 2007, Thabo Mbeki simply shrugged off the issue with the following statement: "As to this... inflow of illegal people, I personally think that it's something we have to live with... it's difficult; you can't put a Great Wall of China between South Africa and Zimbabwe to stop people walking across."²⁶

Parliament has held no dedicated debate on Zimbabwean migration either in plenary or in the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs. There has been no inter-departmental task team to address the issue either and the Immigration Advisory Board (which could act in lieu of a task team) is still virtually moribund. The Disaster Management framework is relatively new and untested, and responsibility is located within a politically and institutionally weak ministry that cannot effectively provide leadership to departments, even though it has a mandate to do so in emergency situations.

The lack of central government leadership and coordination is at least partially responsible for the ineffective nature of provincial and municipal level responses. Ideally, these should be embedded within a wider national policy framework on Zimbabwean migration. In the absence of such a framework, other tiers of government have responded in an ad hoc and weak manner. Government has also not provided any guidance to civil society. International organisations, including UN agencies as well as international NGOs, have not been able to intervene effectively, even though they have experience with different aspects of large-scale migration movements, because they require an explicit invitation, or permission, from a host government to operate.

What is particularly striking about government and party political responses has been the totality of the silence. Not only has there been no coordinated stance to protect Zimbabweans in the country, there have also not been any strong voices for greater control or restriction. In the heat of the xenophobic violence in May 2008, several politicians and government officials called for tighter border controls, but this was not given political priority before then, and renewed discussions arose only in late 2008 in reaction specifically to the cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe and its spread into South Africa.²⁷ Political discussion of migration policy, therefore, has happened mainly in response to sudden and high-profile deadly emergencies (and has subsided again once the emergency is over), rather than in response to an ongoing large-scale movement of people.

Political reasons for the seeming paralysis within government concerning Zimbabweans in South Africa include South Africa's "quiet diplomacy" foreign policy stance towards the Government of Zimbabwe and an associated tendency to downplay the magnitude of the social and economic crisis within Zimbabwe itself. There is also tension between domestic and regional political imperatives. Humanitarian (shelter and food) and refugee rights (blanket legal recognition) approaches to Zimbabwean migration are domestically sensitive, while refugee rights and security-based (control and segregate) approaches

would sit uncomfortably with South Africa's role as "neutral arbiter" in Zimbabwe. The key characteristic of "business as usual" approaches is that they have not required the government to make an open policy statement to either its domestic or regional constituencies. Public opinion may also have played a defining role. Government faces pressure from domestic constituencies suspicious of the use of public resources for foreign nationals. The strength of public (and potential electoral) disaffection with government on service provision issues and migration management was evidenced by the widespread violence against foreigners in informal settlements in May and June 2008.

Further research is undoubtedly needed on the nature of internal debates within government and what the different voices within the ruling ANC and its coalition partners might be saying. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party, for example, are on record as criticising Mbeki's "quiet diplomacy" strategy in Zimbabwe but have not articulated a clear position on Zimbabwean migration to South Africa themselves.

CIVIL SOCIETY, MIGRATION LAW AND SOCIOECONOMIC RIGHTS

There have been a wide range of civil society-based interventions to assist Zimbabwean migrants, including from established and formal South African NGOs, formalised faith-based groups, and "Zimbabwean" organisations (both Zimbabwean self-help groups and those that have been set up specifically to assist migrants.) As in government, there is a division in civil society between those actors dealing with legal and protection issues, and those providing social welfare. The cumulative impact of these initiatives in relation to numbers and needs has been relatively small.

Most of the longest-established and most institutionally stable organisations at the core of the "migrant and refugee rights sector" in civil society are focused on legal work, training, monitoring and advocacy. All aim to hold government accountable in relation to its legal obligations to migrants, rather than themselves providing direct protection or welfare services. Since 1994, legal organisations have been successful in expanding the scope of migrant rights through strategic litigation and have played an important part in monitoring the implementation of existing rights by government through representing migrants whose rights have been abused. Their efforts have resulted in the overturning of the categorical exclusion of Zimbabweans from the asylum system (in 2002)

and the closing down of a detention centre, established for Zimbabwean deportees in Musina, which contravened basic conditions of dignity and administrative justice (in 2007).²⁸

Legal organisations have tended to serve individual clients and there has been no broad legal challenge to the government's deportation policy, its lack of comprehensive legal status provision for Zimbabweans or its lack of socioeconomic rights enforcement. Another key limitation of legal NGOs has been that many of those dealing with migrants have been funded by UNHCR which, until 2007, required that they assist only asylum seekers and refugees. They have also been limited by the provisions of domestic law, which provides few options for undocumented migrants who do not have a strong claim of fleeing persecution. Finally, the effectiveness of legal organisations has been constrained by the ability and will of government actors to implement legal directives. Judgements requiring the DHA to expedite its asylum adjudication process have simply been ignored.

Some civil society organizations have tried to facilitate and improve the interaction between Zimbabweans and the South African government. Information has been provided to government actors in the form of training on migrant rights or to migrant and other NGOs concerning means of accessing services from government. NGOs have also acted as intermediaries between migrants and government and private service providers by advocating that specific (often local) actors improve service provision. Examples include: convincing schools to admit Zimbabwean children, clinics to treat Zimbabweans, police stations to respect asylum permits, and landlords not to discriminate against Zimbabweans. These local initiatives are often quite successful in smoothing relations between migrants and specific schools, clinics and police stations but they have generally not been maintained systematically over time and have not been coordinated beyond the local level.

There have been some higher-level advocacy initiatives, notably through the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA) which acts as an umbrella body for the sector. CoRMSA and its partners have lobbied local government in Musina and city governments in Johannesburg and Cape Town, for example, on the need for more coherent policies regarding Zimbabweans. Unfortunately, the effect has been marginal. Attempts to access and lobby national government decision-makers have also been unsuccessful.

The South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), a state-funded body tasked with independent monitoring of government, could potentially play a major role in high-level migrant rights monitoring and advocacy. In practice, its role has been ambivalent despite an apparent longstanding interest in migrant rights that dates back to the 1990s.²⁹ CoRMSA has openly criticised the SAHRC for its lack of forceful action on issues such as xenophobic attacks on foreigners, including Zimbabweans, and its incapacity to act consistently in pushing for better conditions within the asylum system.³⁰

Despite growing capacity within the civil society advocacy sector, significant problems have remained. Migrant and refugee rights advocacy organisations have been “ghettoised” from other large South African civil society institutions which focus on issues of civil and socioeconomic rights more broadly. Where Zimbabwean issues have brought together a wider range of South African civil society institutions, including labour unions and social movements, the main focus has been on advocacy regarding the situation within Zimbabwe, rather than the plight of Zimbabweans in South Africa.

Another weakness in the sector has been the continuation of a historical focus on refugee rights (especially access to the asylum system and refugee documentation), rather than wider migrant rights and the rights of undocumented migrants. Most significantly, organisations have lacked the capacity for effective high-level national advocacy. Poor access to government, and a frequently confrontational relationship with the DHA, have been a particular problem in the sector.

In the absence of government assistance, several civil society organisations have emerged to provide direct welfare services, including shelter or accommodation, food, clothes, school fees for children, and trauma counselling to Zimbabwean migrants. According to a 2007 study in Johannesburg, Zimbabwean organisations (including churches) provide the most welfare assistance (to 25 percent of those interviewed), followed by South African NGOs (5 percent), the South African government (3 percent) and South African churches (2 percent).³¹

The non-governmental welfare service sector has several weaknesses in responding to the needs of Zimbabwean migrants. First, many mainstream South African welfare providers, including shelters for the homeless, home-based care providers and small income generation NGOs, explicitly exclude non-citizens from their services. Secondly, while many of the migrant- and refugee-focussed welfare service providers are net-

worked with each other throughout the country (for example, through membership in CoRMSA), they are often not networked with the mainstream South African service organisations working on housing, food and basic health care provision. Thirdly, NGO welfare services that do provide for migrants have only covered a very small proportion of their needs. Migrant welfare NGOs have struggled to find the capacity and funds to support the growing numbers of Zimbabweans. Even in central Johannesburg, where most services are located, 60 percent of Zimbabweans reported receiving no assistance from any organisation.³² There are virtually no organised welfare (or legal) services outside the inner cities of the major urban areas. Fourthly, while many small organisations offer movable welfare goods (such as regular soup kitchens and clothes donations), the great need for accommodation has been, or indeed can be, addressed by very few. Finally, some of the organisations, including churches, which have offered accommodation, do not have the experience, structures or capacity to professionally manage such a service. In addition, there have been reports of abuse and violence within these ad hoc shelters.

A significant welfare source for Zimbabweans has been the services that community-based church groups (especially Pentecostal denominations) provide to their Zimbabwean members. Such welfare services are often not "organised" and work more as informal social networks, but they have contributed greatly, along with family and community networks, to the welfare needs of recently arrived Zimbabweans. Further research is needed to quantify such assistance.

As in government, there is virtually no non-governmental institutional capacity or experience in providing emergency response services in South Africa (e.g. emergency housing, water and sanitation, health care, logistics or management). The National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) does not have any local NGOs, apart from the South African Red Cross Society (SARCS), with which it works. SARCS has a national network of branches and can draw on the international expertise and support of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), but its response to the displacement caused by the May 2008 xenophobic violence throughout South Africa demonstrated the limitations of its local operational capacity. Furthermore, the NDMC has only recently started including international humanitarian NGOs with offices in South Africa in its consultations and plans. These include Oxfam, CARE, World Vision, and MSF, all of which have

limited operations in South Africa and have, until recently, used the country mainly as an administrative base for work elsewhere in the region.

LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT FROM CIVIL SOCIETY

Since access to formal and “legal” livelihoods are so strongly dependent on documentation, civil society has not had the mandate or power (except through advocacy) to intervene in the improvement of livelihood conditions through regularisation of migrant status. Some NGOs have offered small-scale skills training and income generation projects for migrants, but this has mostly been limited to Zimbabweans with legal documentation. The dominant livelihood support systems have therefore remained informal Zimbabwean networks and initiatives by individual South African citizens.

Zimbabwean networks play a key role in providing initial accommodation, information about accessing documentation and introduction to various forms of employment.³³ At the heart of these networks are people who have been living and working in South Africa for many years, since before the current political and economic crisis, or since relatively early on in the crisis. Such networks are usually not considered in analyses of host country responses to migration because they are informal, and because perhaps they are not “legible” to bureaucratic institutions in either government or formal civil society. However, their function and activities are crucial in identifying “vulnerable groups” in need of assistance; in identifying when humanitarian needs reach a critical point for both migrants and the host society; and in highlighting why and when formal institutions respond or do not respond.

Key unanswered questions about these networks include whether some ethnic or regional groups have stronger networks than others; whether such networks lead to greater dispersion or concentration of new arrivals in parts of the country; what impact such networks have on the ability of Zimbabweans to become self-supporting (both positively for those receiving assistance and negatively for those giving assistance); and when the resources in such networks become exhausted. The volume of resources and assistance costs which the government and formal civil society save because of these networks should not be underestimated.

A second livelihood resource for Zimbabweans has been their interactions with individual South African citizens. South Africans, in the form of employers, landlords,

churchgoers, neighbours, taxi drivers, and many others, provide what we might call "radically-decentralised" responses to Zimbabwean migration. These responses are positive and negative, ranging from charity to xenophobic violence, providing casual or full-time employment (whether within labour standards or exploitatively), the provision or denial of accommodation, protection from, or identification to, immigration policing and so on.

The way in which South Africans respond to Zimbabwean migrants has several distinctive features. In general, Zimbabweans are viewed much less favourably than migrants from other neighbouring countries such as Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique.³⁴ However, the linguistic and cultural affinity of Zimbabwean Ndebele speakers with South African Ndebele and Zulu speakers has allowed many Zimbabweans from the south of that country to "pass" as South Africans in everyday interactions. The generally good command of English and relatively high education levels of Zimbabweans have also enabled them to enter into service sectors such as the hospitality industry more easily than migrants from many other countries.

Without a clearly articulated policy on the position of Zimbabweans in South Africa, the general public has tended to act on the basis of individual and media opinions (often without an understanding of either immigration law or the Constitution) of what rights Zimbabweans have in the country. Furthermore, the way in which formal government and civil society responses are portrayed – as hand-outs, crime prevention, upholding the Constitution, neighbourly solidarity and so on – impact upon the willingness of the general citizenry to contribute or constrain their own responses.

CIVIL SOCIETY LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION

In responding to Zimbabwean migration, civil society has experienced many of the same leadership and coordination gaps as government. These include the lack of a single organisation or coalition of organisations to champion and coordinate Zimbabwean migration issues; political divisions among different sectors of civil society regarding Zimbabwe and Zimbabweans in South Africa; and institutional and operational differences which affect coordination and cooperation.

Zimbabwean migration, in spite of its volume, has not become a mainstream priority for South Africa's large and established social justice, democratisation and develop-

ment NGOs. The faith-based organisational response has been fragmented and migrant and refugee rights organisations have been relatively ghettoised. While coalitions among these different civil society actors emerged during and immediately after the May 2008 xenophobic violence, such collaboration died down or vanished soon afterwards. While there have been some broad civil society coalitions around Zimbabwean issues, including the Zimbabwe Solidarity and Consultation Forum and the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition, these have focussed mainly on advocacy regarding the situation in Zimbabwe, rather than addressing the plight of Zimbabweans in South Africa.

Social movements with a broad-based membership among poor South Africans have struggled to develop a clear position on Zimbabwean migration. There is a strong popular and media rhetoric in the country that attributes delays in public service delivery and employment creation to the influx of foreigners.³⁵ Advocating for the welfare and legal protection of Zimbabweans has therefore been seen by many as incompatible with the struggle of poor South Africans to access services and employment. Equally, no major South African social movement or civil society grouping has openly advocated for the encampment or expulsion of Zimbabweans, despite evidence that the majority of individual South Africans would favour such a policy.³⁶

The funding base, capacity and sustainability of South African civil society organisations varies greatly. Some receive only donations of food, clothing and so on from members of the community. Others have large annual budgets of millions of rand. A significant number of the organisations, particularly those providing for the basic needs of refugees, have not had any donor funding and also lack the accounting structures to manage such funds.³⁷ Several Zimbabwean organisations have not had formal offices or have constantly been in danger of losing their rented spaces due to lack of funding. Most run on volunteer time as with other refugee-run organisations in the country. This also contributes to the tensions between newer, less stable organisations and more established, professional South African and Zimbabwean organisations.

Organisations run by Zimbabweans in South Africa are divided and politicised, reducing their potential for a coordinated advocacy position, or for galvanising a joint position together with South African organisations. Divisions have emerged between long-term, largely professional, Zimbabwean residents (such as the Zimbabwean Doctors', Nurses' and Lawyers' Associations) and more recent arrivals;

between Ndebele and Shona speakers; and between members of different political parties. Furthermore, Zimbabwean advocacy organisations generally represent urban-based, educated and politically-motivated refugees rather than the larger group of Zimbabweans spread around the country who are mainly concerned with economic survival.³⁸

The Ndebele-Shona divide and a general transfer of conflict and distrust from within Zimbabwe to South Africa has been a feature of some Zimbabwean organisations. A related problem is that Zimbabwean and other organisations have faced difficulties in gaining the trust of potential Zimbabwean clients. For example, the Zimbabwean Torture Victims Project reported in 2005 that "many (actual and potential) respondents [for their survey] were reluctant to participate, suspicious of the motives of the interviewers, and uncomfortable to disclose information that they felt might be used "against them.""³⁹ Finally, Zimbabweans who have been able to integrate into townships and workplaces as Zulu-speakers and/or have acquired South African identity documents have been reluctant to come forward to NGOs (especially Zimbabwean NGOs) for fear of "outing" themselves as non-South Africans.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of South Africa's recent responses to Zimbabwean migration highlights two characteristics of South African governmental and civil society institutions that are certainly not unique to migration management – political silence and institutional fragmentation. There is fragmentation between legal frameworks, government departments, levels of government and political and bureaucratic actors. Furthermore, there has been an antagonistic relationship between government and civil society on Zimbabwean (and other) issues, counteracting the possibility of effective joint interventions.

Due to its own internal fragmentation, civil society has not been able to impact significantly upon the legal framework used by government, nor on government's interpretation and use of existing legal frameworks; it has not been able to put in place a parallel welfare system remotely approximating the need; there have been only very limited attempts to understand and support informal welfare and livelihood support structures for Zimbabweans; and no leadership has emerged from civil society to provide an alternative forum for response coordination or to challenge the government's resounding silence.

Perhaps the most puzzling political characteristic of South African responses to Zimbabwean migration has been the lack of public rhetoric and policy debate. The silence has stretched across sectors – from government to opposition parties, organised civil society and the media. The tendency to avoid rather than engage in open debate on controversial issues must be understood as a reflection of wider South African political processes and traditions.

It is significant that the announcement of a new migration management regime for Zimbabweans in April 2009 – incorporating a moratorium on deportation, a free 90-day visa for new entrants, and a 12-month “special dispensation” permit, with the right to work, for Zimbabweans already in South Africa – was also characterised by the same processes of political silence and institutional fragmentation. The “special dispensation” permit was announced two weeks before the South African national elections, yet there was virtually no reaction from opposition parties, the media or the general public to the government’s decision to grant a previously demonised, and potentially very large, group of people the right to remain and work in the country.

In late 2009, the new regime had yet to be fully implemented, with a notable absence of open communication or cooperation among government departments and between government and civil society, and with virtually no communication with the general public or, indeed, with Zimbabweans. Therefore, fragmentation and silence not only shape a lack of policy, but also the implementation of policies which might otherwise be considered quite progressive and adaptive. This suggests a deeper structural pattern in South African policymaking which extends well beyond the specific issue of managing Zimbabwean migration.

NOTES

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- 3 H. del Vall and T. Polzer, "Emergency Preparedness in South Africa: Twenty-Four Lessons from the Zimbabwean Elections" Refugee Research Programme, University of the Witwatersrand, Acornhoek, 2002.
- 4 Persons fleeing political persecution have arrived throughout the period, but with a massive increase in asylum applications after 2005.
- 5 The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has started discussions on mixed migration, but these have not yet been translated into generally accepted models for legal or humanitarian response; UNHCR, *Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration: A 10-Point Plan of Action* (Geneva, 2007).
- 6 Refoulement is a key concept in international (and South African domestic) law referring to the return of a refugee to a country in which he or she would be endangered; see South African Refugees Act, No. 130 of 1998, Section 2.
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- 17 J. Veary and I. Palmay, "Assessing Non-Citizen Access to Antiretroviral Therapy in Johannesburg" Migrant Rights Monitoring Project Report, FMSP, Johannesburg, 2008.
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- 19 Disaster Management Act, No. 57 of 2002, Section 1.
- 20 Department of Home Affairs, "Statement on Transit Shelter for Refugees" Media Release 5 October 2007.

- 21 A. Bloch, "The Development Potential of Zimbabweans in the Diaspora," IOM Migration Research Series No. 17, Geneva, 2005; Human Rights Watch, "Neighbours in Need: Zimbabweans Seeking Refuge in South Africa," New York, Human Rights Watch, 2008; D. Makina, "Summary of Key Findings: Survey of Profile of Migrant Zimbabweans in South Africa: A Pilot Study" University of South Africa, Pretoria, 2007; Zimbabwe Torture Victims Project, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: A Window on the Situation of Zimbabweans Living in Gauteng," IDASA, Johannesburg, 2005; CoRMSA, *Protecting Refugees*.
- 22 Multiple answers were possible.
- 23 Makina, "Summary of Key Findings," p. 5.
- 24 Veary and Palmay, "Non-citizen Access to Antiretroviral Therapy."
- 25 CoRMSA, *Protecting Refugees*.
- 26 President Mbeki's statement to the National Assembly, 17 May 2007.
- 27 SAPA, "DA and ANC in Row Over Xenophobia" *Politicsweb online* 29 May 2008.
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- 30 CoRMSA. *Protecting Refugees*.
- 31 Makina, "Summary of Key Findings."
- 32 Ibid, p. 5.
- 33 Bloch, "The Development Potential of Zimbabweans in the Diaspora."
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- 36 *The Perfect Storm*, p.26.
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- 39 Zimbabwe Torture Victims Project, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place," p. 2.

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ZIMBABWE'S EXODUS

Crisis, Migration, Survival

"The title of this book captures the epic, even biblical, quality of migration from Zimbabwe. The editors of this collection have assembled an excellent team of researchers writing on the principal aspects and destinations of Zimbabwean emigrants. We are provided with a rounded and compelling picture of the great exodus and behind the turmoil of exile and return we can glimpse the extraordinary people behind the statistics."

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Jonathan Crush is the Director of the Southern African Migration Programme (SAMP), Professor of Global Development Studies at Queen's University, Canada, and Honorary Professor at the University of Cape Town.

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